

# 1 and 2 Timothy

Commentary on Christian Ministry: Essentials –  
Encouragement – Examples - Exhortations

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## **1 Timothy**

### **Introduction**

Throughout the history of the world, and of the Church, there have always been controversies, heresies, policy disagreements, and antagonistic reactions to those with differing beliefs and behaviors. Part of the strife and disturbances within the world at large and specific societies in particular are traceable to how controversies and differences are handled.

The letters/epistles of Paul, for example, were often written in the face of controversies which affected the life and function of local churches. His writings were often prompted or motivated for three primary reasons: (1) they were written to the congregations of those with whom he had close, personal contact; (2) they were written in response to correspondence/s from some of those congregations; (3) they were written in preparation for a visit to a particular congregation.

Paul, therefore, had primary influence on the development of Christian doctrine/teaching. His writings may be arranged under three primary groupings: (1) Pastoral – 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus; (2) Prison – Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, Ephesians; (3) Missionary – Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

### **Gnosticism**

One of the major heretical teachings which affected the early church, and which lingers still in various forms and features in the modern church, was/is known as gnosticism. Its basic, foundational teaching appears to have originated in the philosophical teachings of Plato and other forms of speculation about the origin of sin, suffering, evil, and God or gods. The conclusion was that matter is evil and spirit is good.

While this oversimplification begs forgiveness, its more detailed ideas spawned significant problems for the early church. Some of these problems are noted below and formed one of the primary planks for Paul's writing of these so-called pastoral epistles (1, 2 Timothy; Titus – in a separate commentary); so-called, that is, because they contain much-needed admonitions, aims, directives, and instructions for pastors Timothy and Titus.

It is also interesting that 1 and 2 Timothy were most likely Paul's last written letters and were to his long time companion in ministry, Timothy. He writes with conscientious concern that Timothy continue in faithfulness to the pastoral responsibilities which he details in these writings.

### **Purpose**

Like most, if not all, New Testament letters/epistles, 1 and 2 Timothy are occasional writings. That is, there were specific reasons or occasions which necessitated their written compositions. In fact, there are four major reasons or purposes for writing these three letters: (1) to combat heresy; (2) to give instructions concerning the heresy; (3) to recommend these leaders to their churches; (4) to set up general guidelines for the organization and life of the church.

### *Combating Controversies: Heretical Teachings*

It is difficult, if not impossible, to adequately address and correct false, heretical teachings if such teachings are not known or isolated and pinpointed. In this brief section, therefore, the summary identification of heretical teachings which threatened, to some degree, the Christian faith are noted: (1) speculative myths rather than faith (1:4; 2 Tim. 4:4); (2) endless genealogies (1:4); (3) many gods (1:17); (4) God's outreach is limited to intellectually endowed ones (2:4); (5) two or more gods and a series of mediators between god and man (2:5); (6) rigid asceticism – no marriage and no meats (1 Tim. 4:3); (7) God's creation is not good (1 Tim. 4:4); (8) Godless and worldly fables (4:7); (9) questions and strifes over words (6:4); (10) Godless chatter (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:16); (11) no resurrection of the body (2 Tim. 2:18); (12) senseless speculations or arguments (2 Tim. 2:23); (13) the body is matter and thus evil (2 Tim. 3:6)

**I Timothy**  
Scripture in a Structural Format

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## I Timothy Commentary

### I PERSONAL COMMUNICATION (1:1-2)

1:1 – “Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the authoritative order of God our Saviour and Christ Jesus our hope”

The word “apostle” (*apostolos*) is composed of two words: *apo* (“from”) and *stello* (“I send”) indicating one who is sent by another; in this case, of course, Paul is acknowledging that he has been sent by none other than Christ Jesus. He further clarifies that his being “sent” is not based on his own ideas, plans, or initiatives, but is in accordance with God’s “*command, order, injunction*” (*epitagen*) [BAG, 302]. [This word is used exclusively in the NT by Paul: Rom. 16:26; 1 Cor. 7:6, 25; 2 Cor. 8:8; Tit. 1:3; 2:15]. Barclay (17) notes that the word refers to “the royal command which comes to a man either directly or by some oracle from God. . . . Paul thought of himself as a man holding the king’s commission” via a personal communication from God.” But here the command “proceeds equally from God and Christ Jesus” (White, 90). This was a conviction and commission which captured and catapulted him into the service of God which was both in this world and beyond it in terms of ultimate significance.

For the complete NT use of the term “Saviour” see my article “Saviour: God’s Graceful Gesture” on my website: [archive.org/details/@mandm313](http://archive.org/details/@mandm313).

God as Saviour is mentioned two other times in this letter: 2:3; 4:10.

Paul’s designation of Christ Jesus as “our hope” (*tes elpidos humon*) also occurs in Col. 1:27 [cp. 1 The. 1:3]. The word “hope” implies confidence and/or assurance. Jesus is here identified as “its very substance and foundation” (Ellicott, 2). Wuest (23-24) links this word with the hope which is grounded in “the historical manifestation of the Son of God” in the flesh. This is maximum security at its highest and most superlative framework.

1:2 – “to Timothy a genuine child in faith, grace, mercy, peace from God [the] Father and Christ Jesus our Lord”

In the NT, only the letters to Philemon, Titus, and Timothy are addressed to individuals. Timothy is mentioned often in the NT: Acts 16:1; 17:14, 15; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4; Rom. 16:21; 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10; 2 Cor. 1:1, 19; Phi. 1:1; 2:19; Col. 1:1; 1 The. 1:1; 3:2, 6; 2 The. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:18; 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:2; Philem. 1; Heb. 13:23.

The word “genuine” (*gnesio*) means “true, loyal.” Vincent (202) notes it means “*by birth-relation*” – that is, the new birth from above. Vine (1182) adds the meaning of “sincere.” It occurs only three other times in the NT: 2 Cor. 8:8; Phi. 4:3; Tit. 1:4. The word forms an inseparable link with the words “in faith” (*en*

*pistei*) and means that Timothy is a “true born” (Buchsels, 727) child of God because of or by means of his faith. The “stress is on spiritual character, faith in and loyalty to Christ” (Lock, 6). The term may “be rendered *lawful, legitimate*” (White, 91).

Paul’s frequent use of the term “grace” may, as Liefeld notes (50),

fail to communicate to those who are not theologically literate, while on the other hand it has become such a common term with the nearly universal use of the hymn ‘Amazing Grace’ that it tends to lose much of its inherent content. To read ‘grace be with you’ to a person who knows nothing of Christianity can be as meaningless as hearing ‘the force be with you’ is to someone who does not know the American *Star Wars* vocabulary. The meaning of ‘grace,’ therefore, is not merely that God gives us free salvation. It is also more than ‘God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense,’ though there is truth in that acronym. The ancient Greek usage of that word implies an inability on the part of the recipient that requires the help of someone else. We need grace because we have no other option.

In addition to the common employment of “grace and peace” in Paul’s letters, here and in 2 Timothy he adds “mercy” (*eleos*) which “implies more tender grace, as it were, towards the wretched, and the experience of this Divine mercy produces fitness for the Gospel ministry” (Bengel, 504).

White (91) suggests that the inclusion of the word “may be a subtle indication of the apostle’s anxiety as to Timothy’s administrative capacity.” This seems a bit vague and speculative to this writer, but may warrant consideration which surpasses this writer’s personal awareness and concern.

At any rate, the word “mercy” does create a concern which should be held by one and all: “The key to understanding the importance of this concept is to have a healthy sense of one’s own sin and need. That will bring about an appreciation for mercy” (Liefeld, 51).

Lenski’s differentiation (*Matthew*, 191) between grace and mercy are worthy of notation:

The noun *eleos* and its derivatives always deal with what we see of pain, misery, and distress, these results of sin; and *charis*, ‘grace,’ always deals with the sin and guilt itself. The one extends relief, the other pardon; the one cures, heals, helps, the other cleanses and reinstates. With God *charis* is always first and *eleos* second.

Trench notes that the word “grace” involves “joy to the hearers or beholders of it” (167); “favour” (167); “the thankfulness which the favour calls out in return” (167); “the goodness of God to man, of the worthy to the unworthy, of the holy to the sinful” (168); “unearned and unmerited” (169). “Mercy,”

on the other hand, “has special and immediate regard to the *misery* which is the consequence of these sins, being the tender sense of this misery displaying itself in the effort, which only the continued perverseness of man can hinder or defeat, to assuage and entirely remove it” (169).

“Peace” is that state of being or condition which “flows from a consciousness of reconciliation and union with God” (Harvey, 20).

Gealy notes that “for sinful man harassed by sinful men in a temporal order infected by ingrown sin there can be peace only under the grace and mercy of God” (381).

Perhaps, the correlation and connection between these three terms is sufficiently summarized by Knight (67): “*charis* – God’s ongoing forgiveness and enabling, *eleos* – God’s sympathy and concern, *eirene* – God’s tranquility and stability within and among them as individuals and as a Christian community.”

Trentham (12) states that these three terms “compose a benediction which gives us a glimpse of the face of God.” Neither of them may be experienced apart from “God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.”

## II PERSUASIVE COMMISSION (1:3-20)

### A. Confidence (1:3-6)

1:3 - “Just as I urged you to remain in Ephesus, while [I was] traveling to Macedonia, in order that you may instruct certain ones not to go on teaching false doctrine”

Rather than accompanying Paul to Macedonia, Paul had urged Timothy to stay in Ephesus for a very important task: prohibiting the teaching of false doctrine by certain ones.

Although the verb “urged” (*parekalesa*) is not in the imperative mood, it, nevertheless, “is both authoritative and personal” (Knight, 71-72).

It is *authoritative* in the sense that Paul sensed the urgency of combating the spiritual warfare at hand and wanted Timothy to share that same sense of urgency. But it is also *personal* in the sense that Paul had confidence in Timothy’s abilities and passion to responsibly assume and carry out proper prohibitive instructions against false doctrine.

The word “instruct” (*paraggeiles*) is not in the imperative mood either but carries the idea of forcefully transmitting a message which must be vigorously delivered so as to undercut the very foundation of teachings which, within themselves, undercut the very foundation of the Christian faith.

The word “certain ones” (*tisin*) is “expressly vague” (Robertson, 560) and “contemptuous [though] assumed that Timothy knows who they are” (Vincent, 202).

The word translated “false doctrine” (*heterodidaskalein*) is composed of

two smaller words: *heteros* (“another of a different kind”) and *didaskaleo* (“teaching”). This teaching was contrary to and “in opposition to the Gospel” (Bengel, 506). This teaching was “irreconcilable with” (Vincent, 203) the truth of the Gospel. “Paul does not mean to deal gently with it” (White, 92). The only other occurrence of this word in the NT is in 6:3.

- 1:4 - “nor to pay close attention to myths and to endless genealogies, which bring about senseless speculation rather than management of God’s household in the faith”

The infinitive, “to pay close attention” (*prosechein*) is used by Paul exclusively in these pastoral epistles (3:8; 4:1, 13; Tit. 1:14), and occurs here in conjunction with “not” (*mede*) indicating prohibition. The meaning is to avoid holding on to or giving oneself to, thus, to be on guard against two specific items:

(1) “myths” (*muthois*) or “fanciful stories, fables.” Outside of the pastoral epistles (4:7: [profane, not sacred]; 2 Tim. 4:4; Tit. 1:14: [contrary to truth]), this word occurs in the NT only one other time: 2 Pt. 1:16: [without a biblical basis or tradition]. It refers “not to the stories and narrative of the O.T. taken in their plain straightforward meaning, but to the arbitrary allegorical treatment of them” (White, 92). Gealy (383) suggests that such myths extend beyond the twisted use of the O.T. and includes any “purely imaginative, fictitious, and therefore false and untrue accounts of religious reality which misrepresent and conceal what they would reveal.”

(2) “endless genealogies” (*genealogiais aperantois*) – The word “endless” occurs here only in the NT. It refers to speculations which tended to produce other speculations; listings which only created more listings. After all, when the wanderings of the mind are unrestrained and fall outside the boundaries of teachings which are concrete and in definitive agreement with structured scriptural revelations, a vicious cycle of never-ending pursuits is consequential; it creates a theological cul-de-sac of confusion and corruption. That is, that which has no end can have no result.

The word “genealogies” has been understood to mean “Jewish apocryphal legends” (Harvey, 20; Spicq/Jeremias/Hinson, 307) or gnostic speculations about a series of emanations involved in the creation of the earth and mankind, matter versus spirit, and many other elements and tendencies embedded in Platonic and Greek philosophies which the redemption of mankind from sin through Jesus Christ totally and absolutely unnecessary.

However one may understand these “myths and genealogies,” it is clear that they do not contribute to the management of God’s household of people of faith. Or, as the RSV translates: “the divine training that is in



faith”; “our trusteeship to God through faith” (Williams); “no divine training in faith” (Beck) – which training, of course, is “God’s design” (Hinson, 307) for people of faith.

- 1:5 - “Now the goal of the instruction is sacrificial love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a genuine or authentic faith”

The verb “instruct” (*paraggeiles*) in v. 3 finds its noun counterpart “instruction” (*paraggelias*) in this verse. The particulars about this instruction are its (1) goal and its (2) content. Its (1) goal, of course, is its aim, its intended outcome, its reach, its result. This teaching is not aimless or indirect or merely general. Its (2) content is “sacrificial love.”

The word “from” (*ek*) denotes the source from which this love flows:

\*\* “a pure heart” – This refers to that single-minded focus and disciplined intention to serve God primarily. The word “pure” (*katharas*) denotes one who is “cleansed by the forgiveness and cleansing that comes to those who continually confess their sins [and] ‘heart’ (*kardias*) is the person as he or she really is within himself or herself and before God” (Knight, 77).

\*\* “a good conscience” – This is the result of conscientious watchfulness against the tugs of temptations to become sinfully stained and soiled. The word translated “conscience” (*suneideseos*) is “a co-knowledge (with oneself), the witness borne to one’s conduct by conscience, that faculty by which we apprehend the will of God, as that which is designed to govern our lives” (Vine, 230). Hinson quotes Pierce who “insists that conscience evaluates past actions and behavior and thus ignores its function of evaluation and decision-making in the present and for the future” (78). Cp. 1 Peter 3:21.

\*\* “a genuine/authentic faith” – Brown (6) notes that “the love which has not its root in faith is at best ‘earthly,’ and in danger of becoming ‘sensual’ and ‘devilish’ too.” The word “genuine/authentic” (*anupokritou*) means to be without hypocrisy. The word “faith” (*pistis*) denotes “(1) a firm conviction, producing a full acknowledgement of God’s revelation or truth; (3) a personal surrender to Him; (3) a conduct inspired by such surrender” (Vine, 411). It embraces the idea of union and communion with God and commitment to Him – regardless!

Lock (10) notes that “these words are in an ascending scale, simplicity of aim, which is always ready to listen to truth, a constant desire to do right, and a faith which accepts Christ as its guide with sincerity and consistency, resulting in love for God and man.”

- 1:6 - “from which some, having departed from [this goal and its content] have been turned aside into empty, fruitless speculation”

Rather than actively and faithfully pursuing this instruction and its goal

and content, “some” (*tines* – plural indicating more than one) had “departed” (*astochesantes*) from it. The word means to miss the mark, to leave the way, to lose one’s way; to wander away and go astray. By actively resisting and rejecting God’s revelation, they thereby “have been turned aside” (*exetrapesan*) or disabled and disqualified from union and communion with God and His people. The end or alternative result of this resistance and rejection of God’s revelation is “empty, fruitless speculation” (*mataiologian*). It leads to nowhere and nothing that is useful for Christian growth and development. It is utterly worthless. Vincent (205) calls it “vain jangling” or “empty chatter.”

## B. Corruption (1:7-11)

- 1:7 - “while desiring to be teachers of the law, yet they do not understand either the things which they are saying or the things about which they are confidently speaking”

These false teachers had proclaimed that their true desire was to be teachers of the law, that they only knew how to properly teach it. Here, however, Paul “refers to the ambitious pride of the false teachers and exposes their utter incompetence” (Wycliffe, 844). He declares that “they not only do not understand the subjects they discuss, Paul charges, they do not even understand what they are saying” (Hinson, 307). It is the unavoidable, inevitable declension and degeneration when the truth of the Gospel is resisted and rejected. It is evidence of corruption.

- 1:8 - “Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully”

The law is good when it comes to moral excellence and its true purpose or intention of showing people how short they come of God’s standard, how bad they are apart from Him, and that the way of faith is the only way to be accepted by God. In other words, “it was not intended as a means of the sanctification of the saints, but as a means of conviction and warning of the wicked. It cannot, therefore, be that means of higher Christian experience and life which these false teachers would make it” (Harvey, 22). If the law is not used lawfully or in accordance with this specific design, it is being misused and becomes bad or negative, and is more evidence of corruption.

- 1:9 - “Knowing this, that the law is not made for righteous ones but for lawless and rebellious ones, ungodly and sinful ones, unholy and vile ones, strikers of fathers and mothers, murderers”

An additional clarification about the law is now given. Its aim or purpose

is not to regulate the lives of righteous people, because “the righteous are those [already] living in conformity to the requirements of the law by the work of Christ wrought by the Spirit in them – cp Rom. 8:4” (Knight, 83). [See my commentary on Galatians 3:1-4:31 and the contrasting of pathways to God: Faith versus Law: [archive.org/details/@mandm313](http://archive.org/details/@mandm313).] Therefore, a listing of people whose lives are blatant evidence of corrupt life styles, and who stand in need of conviction and conversion now unfolds:

- \*\* “lawless ones” (*anomois*) – These are people who know the difference between right and wrong and deliberately choose the wrong in order to fulfill their own selfish aims and desires.
- \*\* “rebellious ones” (*anupotaktōis*) – These are people who refuse to obey any authorities in any field (business, education, military, etc.) and resist any attempts to control or moderate their behaviors. “Those who will not come into subjection: subjection to law is *refused*” (Vincent, 207). The only other occurrences of this word in the NT are: Titus 1:6, 10, and Heb. 2:8.
- \*\* “ungodly ones” (*asebesi*) – These are people who demonstrate irreverence or anti-religious sentiments. It is defiant of God. It is “a deliberate withholding from God of his dues of prayer and of service, a standing, so to speak, in battle array against Him” (Trench, 242).
- \*\* “sinful ones” (*hamartolois*) – These are people whose moral standards are questionable. It represents those who are careless, negligent, or loose in their morals.
- \*\* “unholy ones” (*anosiois*) – These are people who are indecent, wicked, and irreligious. They have a contemptuous disregard of God; vulgar.
- \*\* “vile ones” (*bebelois*) – These are people who “disobey God’s laws and belittles His worship” (Barclay, 38). This word is used of Esau in Heb. 12:16 about selling his birthright because he did not regard it as something sacred “in order to supply a common need” (Vincent, 208). People who are “*profane, unhallowed* in an ethical way” (BAG, 138).
- \*\* “strikers of fathers and mothers” (*patroloais kai metroloais*) – These are people who “*strike or even kill their parents*” (Barclay, 38). It means to smite or hit hard. These “were crimes very rare even among the heathen” (Harvey, 23).
- \*\* “murderers” (*androphovois*) – The word literally means “*man-slayers* to include not only the act of murder, but also the feeling of anger against a brother” (Barclay, 38). This is the only occurrence of this word in the NT.

1:10 – “sexually immoral ones, homosexuals/sodomites, kidnappers, liars,

perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching”

\*\* “sexually immoral ones” (*pornois*) – These are people who indulge in fornication or illicit sexual intercourse.

\*\* “homosexuals/sodomites” (*arsenokoitais*) – The KJV translates, “them that defile themselves with mankind.” This word occurs only one other time in the NT: 1 Cor. 6:9 where the KJV translates, “abusers of themselves with mankind.” It is a clear reference to sexual perverts and their distorted behaviors which offend God.

\*\* “kidnappers” (*andrapodistais*) – The word itself means “to catch a man by the foot” (Lenski, 512). This was a particular problem in the ancient world when men would steal the slaves of other men (Robertson, 562). As Barclay notes: “In the days when Rome was specially eager to learn the arts of Greece and slaves who were skilled in Greek literature and music and art were specially valuable, the result was that frequently valuable slaves were either seduced from their masters or kidnapped” (39).

\*\* “liars” (*pseustais*) – This refers to people who bear “false witness” (Hinson, 308).

\*\* “perjurers” (*epiorkois*) – Both “liars” and now “perjurers” are those “who do not hesitate to twist the truth to gain dishonourable ends” (Barclay, 39). This is the only occurrence of this word in the NT.

\*\* “and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching” – Even though no other sins are here specified, “the law is against those who commit *any* form of sin” (Harvey, 23). The word “sound” indicates teaching which is healthy, wholesome, constructive, upbuilding, helpful and morally healthful to lead one beyond sin to faith in God for forgiveness.

1:11 - “in accordance with the glorious gospel of the blessed God, of which I have been entrusted”

This “sound teaching” is here said to be in conjunction with the good news of God and from God.

Harvey (23) notes that “this verse qualifies the whole preceding statement, and affirms that, according to the gospel, the law is not enacted for the righteous, but for the lawless.” After all, the gospel is the good news that “we are justified and saved from all condemnations of the law through Christ by faith” (Lenski, 513).

The word “blessed” (*makariou*) aptly describes God because of His purpose in the law to reveal mankind’s need for His grace and His provision of that grace through Jesus Christ. The word is also used of

God by Paul because God “entrusted” (*episteuthen*) that gospel to him. This verb is usually translated “believe” throughout the NT. It signifies that God “believed” in him enough to commit that gospel into his care. It represents his commission from God to saturate the corrupt territory in which he lived and ministered with the good news by which one may be delivered from such corruption.

C. Calling (1:12-17)

1:12 - “I continuously possess gratitude to the One Christ Jesus our Lord who enabled me [through regenerative conversion and calling] that He Himself regarded me faithful [as seen in His] having appointed [me] into ministry”

Trentham (18) notes well that “the measure of a man’s character is reflected in that for which he is most grateful. Some are grateful for their immunity from sacrifice, struggle, and service. Paul was thankful for a mission which involved all of these and for the strength to fulfill his high calling.”

The two words translated “I continuously possess gratitude” (*Charin echo*) consist of a present tense verb (*echo*) which indicates an ongoing process or constant attention given to some concern, in this case, “gratitude” or “thankfulness” (*Charin*). This latter word is more commonly translated “grace.” It, indeed, speaks of “kindness, mercy, goodwill, a special manifestation of the divine presence, activity, power or glory; a favor, gift, blessing.” It entails both his conversion and calling in which he received what he did not deserve.

The direction or object to which such gratitude is extended is not left to guesswork of speculation. It is “to the One Christ Jesus our Lord.” The content of this gratitude is also specified: “who enabled me” to be what He called me to be. The word translated “enabled” (*endunamosanti*) consists of two smaller words: “in” (*en*) and “ability” (*dunamoo*). The word means to instill strength or power in someone for a purpose: the ability to engage in and accomplish some task.

This enabling ability transpired when he was regeneratively converted and called on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-22; 26:1-18). The aorist tense of this verb refers to that particular time in history he received this calling and strength. In fact, this word first appears in the NT in Acts 9:22. It also occurs in Rom. 4:20; Eph. 6:10; Phi. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:1; 4:17; Heb. 11:34.

Paul declares that Jesus Himself “regarded me faithful [as seen in His] having appointed [me] into ministry.” Paul’s faithfulness must not be viewed as the basis for his conversion and calling, for that would be an admission of Paul’s personal worthiness and works rather than God’s

grace and mercy. After all, he was sincere in his persecution of Christians, thinking that he was thereby doing God a favor. But sincerity is sinfulness if such sincerity is misdirected – for Paul and anyone else. Nevertheless, the intervention of Jesus into his life was what transformed or turned that sincerity from sin into service or ministry. The word “appointed” (*themenos*) refers to that transforming moment when God’s arrangement and resolve for Paul came to fulfillment or fruition. This was “that appointment by which God fixes one’s course to a certain end” (Bengel, 509).

- 1:13 - ”formerly being a blasphemer and a persecutor and an insolent person, but was treated with mercy, because, being ignorant, I acted in constant moments of faithlessness”

Paul knew, of course, that his being appointed could not have been due to any deserved dessert or merit on his part. After all, his former life was one as a (1) blasphemer = the word itself means stupid and injurious speech against others; (2) persecutor = against people who claimed to be the people of God; the word occurs only here in the NT; Paul endeavored “to compel others to do the same” (Plummer, 54). And (3) an insolent person = insulting behaviors when “insolence [rudeness and arrogance] and contempt of others break forth in wanton and outrageous acts” (Vincent, 211). This word occurs only one other time in the NT: Rom. 2:24. So, in Who’s Who, he qualifies for “The Worst All Around.” His being “treated with mercy” (*eleethen*) means he did not receive what he deserved. The explanation is that he did so while in a state or condition of ignorance as to what God really wanted. His former “*ignorance* does not deserve pardon in itself; but in classifying the reasons which might impel a man to reject salvation, it is opposed to pride and every higher degree of wickedness” (Bengel, 509).

Ignorance is often a contributing factor in many cases of sin. “No man, if he knew fully the sinfulness of his sin, its inevitable and ongoing consequences, would be guilty of the insane folly of defying Almighty God” (Gould, 562).

The verb “acted” (*epoiesā*) is in the aorist tense and refers to intermittent or periodic acts of less than desirable and God-pleasing behaviors. The root from which these undesirable behaviors arose is “in faithlessness” (*en apistia*). This word is composed of the usual word for “faith” (*pistis*) and the prefix “a” which negates the ordinary meaning of the word; thus, “without faith.” That is, his 3 negative traits noted above were all acts of “blindness of heart” (Robertson, 563) and “sinful disbelief” (Wuest, 34).

- 1:14 - “and the grace of our Lord overflowed beyond measure together with faith and love which are in connection with Christ Jesus”

The word “grace” (*charis*) appears here for the third time in this letter (1:2, 12; it occurs again in 6:21) and is in conjunction with its owner, “our Lord.” Here it is also linked with another word which appears here only in the NT: “overflowed beyond measure” (*huperepleonasen*). The KJV translates, “exceeding abundant,”; Robertson translates, “abounded exceedingly”; the NASB translates, “more than abundant”; Williams translates, “in increasing floods”; and Beck translates, “poured His undeserved kindness.”

It was this “overflowing grace” from the Lord which could drench with complete destruction the transgressions of Paul. It was this “overflowing grace of God which had produced faith and love in the heart of Paul as the indwelling Christ moved into the control room of his life” (Trentham, 20). Only the grace of God could transform one from “faithlessness” to “faith and love.”

It was all in accordance with God’s calling of Paul to salvation and service.

- 1:15 - “It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am foremost”

The words “a faithful saying” (*pistos ho logos*) occur 4 other times in the pastoral letters: 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Tit. 3:8. These words are also accompanied by “worthy of all acceptance” (*pase apodoches axios*) in 4:9. This is “an expression used to give solemnity and emphasis to the following statement, as worthy of the utmost attention and confidence” (Harvey, 25).

The saying is plain enough: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” The word “came” (*elthen*) denotes an historical invasion to earth, which, of necessity, affirms His pre-existence. As the song, *Lord, I Lift Your Name on High* by Paul Baloche puts it: “You came from heaven to earth to show the way – From the earth to the cross my debt to pay – From the cross to the grave from the grave to the sky – Lord, I lift Your Name on high.”

For “sinners,” the saying consists of hope, joy, peace, love, forgiveness, reconciliation, and adoption into the family of God.

Paul identifies himself as the worst of the bunch: “of whom I am foremost” (*protos*). This assertion embraces his former self-identification in v. 13: “blasphemer, persecutor, insolent.”

- 1:16 - “But for this reason I received mercy, that in me [the] foremost Christ Jesus may demonstrate perfect patience for an example of those who would exercise faith in Him for eternal life”

The words “but for this reason” (*alla dia touto*) gathers together his

expressions of self-depreciation in verses 13 and 15 into a justifiable framework as a sinner who stood in utmost need for God's mercy, already acknowledged in v. 13.

His repetition of the word "foremost" (*proto*) is Paul acknowledging once again his spiritually bankrupt condition before God. He thereby regards himself as not only in need of God's mercy and compassion because of his having been such "a high-handed transgressor" (Vincent, 212) but also as one whose reception of such mercy tilted his mind into a state of rapturous amazement and astonishing gratitude. In fact, as "the foremost," his very selection for service by Christ Jesus reflects that even a perfect "specimen" of sinfulness could be the object of God's merciful kindness.

In fact, Paul's selection for service demonstrated God's patience or "holding out long under provocation. Did any man provoke Jesus more severely than Saul? But instead of promptly striking this blasphemous, persecuting insolent down with the justice he deserved, Jesus bore him and kept bearing him and finally attained the most astonishing success by means of his mercy" (Lenski, 525).

In fact, Paul notes here that he was an "example" (*hupotuposin*) or "sample of the kind of sinners that Jesus came to save" (Robertson, 565). God's patience with Paul illustrates that God's pathways of reaching the lowest are real and by obedient faith, like Paul, others may also "exercise faith in Him for eternal life."

1:17 - "Now to the King Eternal, immortal, invisible, only God, honor and glory forever and ever, Amen."

Paul's reflection, contemplation, and meditation upon it all triggered "the outburst of a heart that is supercharged with feeling and stirred" (Lenski, 527), a doxology of praise to the King of kings in the form of adoration and adulation! Paul characterizes this King with four terms:

\*\* "eternal" – He had no beginning and will have no ending. "The general meaning is that as king God rules in the past, present, and future" (Knight, 105).

\*\* "immortal" - This means that this King is not subject to decay or destruction and cannot perish or become corruptible. He is imperishable. "His majesty is neither enhanced by time nor tarnished by time; neither is he limited by time. He transcends time and is not dependent upon the time sequence for his knowledge of the future" (Trentham, 22).

\*\* "invisible" – Some deny God because they do not see Him, the result being that they will never see Him. But those who see Him by faith, have perfect vision, indeed. As Jesus Himself



stated in John 14:9, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father.” No wonder the hymn writer, Walter Chalmers Smith, composed his hymn based upon this verse:

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
Most blessed, more glorious, The Ancient of days,  
Almighty, victorious – Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,  
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;  
Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above,  
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life Thou givest – to both great and small,  
In all life Thou livest – the true life of all;  
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,  
And wither and perish – but naught changeth Thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,  
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;  
All praise we would render – O help us to see  
‘Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!

\*\* “only God” – This reflects the monotheism of both the OT and the NT (Deut. 6:4-5; Rom. 3:29; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; 1 Tim. 2:5-6). He is the only One Who deserves such doxology!

Thus, to Him alone belongs “honor” (*time*) – i.e., the recognition of respect and worthiness which is without parallel; there are no competitors for this superlative recognition of respect and worthiness. Thus, to Him alone belongs “glory” (*doxa*) – i.e., the recognition of “the luminous manifestation of God’s person, his glorious revelation of himself” (Knight, 106) in Jesus Christ.

The word “Amen” means “truly, verily, say it again, so be it, let it be so both now and forever.”

This “eternal, immortal, invisible, only God” deserves a resounding affirmation from all assembled people. Those who fail to do so justly deserve the damnation which is forthcoming for all who follow after “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of possessions” (I John 2:16-17) – all of which is from the world and is actively antagonistic to the will of God. Only those who consistently do the will of God abide forever!

D. Counsel (1:18-20)

1:18 - “This instruction I commit to you, child Timothy, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that you may fight the good fight by them”

The noun “instruction” (*paraggelian*) occurs here for the second (v. 5) and final time in this letter. The verb form of this word (*paraggello*) occurs in v. 3; 4:11; 5:7; 6:13, 17. “It is the positive aspect of what is there negatively expressed; but as it concerns Timothy directly, it has reference to the general contents of the epistle” (White, 100). It is, therefore, a continuation of either v. 3 or v. 5.

The word “commit” (*paratithemai*) occurs here only in this letter but will be used again in 2 Tim. 2:2. The word itself is composed of two smaller words: *para* (“beside, near, in the presence of”) and *tithemi* (“to lay aside, to store up, to set, to put, to lay”).

BAG (628) notes that the word means “give over, entrust, commend; to entrust something to someone for safe keeping or transmission to others” (cp. Knight, 107-108; Liefeld, 77). It carries the idea of making a deposit with trust and confidence.

The term “child” (*teknon*) “was used as a term of endearment in connection with adults also” (Wuest, 37), so that Paul is not speaking of him as some inferior, immature, childish person.

Reference to “the prophecies previously made about” Timothy leaves readers somewhat in the dark because there is no mention of them in the earlier sections of this letter. Liefeld (7) suggests they “pertain somehow to the fight he will wage.” Wuest (37) suggests “*the prophecies* in our passage are the single expressions or detailed contents of the prophecies mention in 1 Timothy 4:14 [about him] as the recipient of a special spiritual gift” (cp. White, 100). Gealy (394) suggests that “at Timothy’s consecration and appointment there were a number of prophets present and prophesying, as in Acts 13:1-3, or that there were various occasions when prophetic guidance was sought and found by Timothy.”

The purpose clause, “that you may fight the good fight by them,” may lend persuasive support to Liefeld’s stance. After all, as Barclay (51) reminds us:

It is not to a *battle* that we are summoned; it is to a *campaign*. Life is one long campaign, a service from which there is no release, not a short, sharp struggle after which a man can lay aside his arms and rest in peace. To change the metaphor, life is not a sprint; it is a marathon race. It is there that the danger enters in. It is necessary to be for ever

on the watch. 'Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.'  
The temptations of life never cease their search for a chink in the armour of the Christian. It is one of the commonest dangers in life to proceed in a series of spasms. We must remember that we are summoned to a campaign which goes on as long as life does.

Harvey (27) lends additional support to Liefeld's position: "Encouraged by the memory of these divine, prophetic words, he should persevere, amid all conflicts and sufferings, in the great work of the ministry, which had thus been distinctly given him by God."

The words, "the good fight" remind Timothy that this spiritual warfare is one in which complete victory is assured.

- 1:19 - "having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected have made shipwreck with reference to the faith"

The words "faith and a good conscience" are the means by which this spiritual warfare will be achieved or accomplished. They are the *sine qua non* ("something essential") or necessary as far as components or tools for victory are concerned. Without them - "having rejected them" as some have done - a rather bleak picture will develop. Without them, a certain "shipwreck of the faith" will occur, as faith will be broken and shattered into pieces.

- 1:20 - "among whom belong Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, in order that they may be taught not to blaspheme"

In fact, this being broken or shattered into pieces actually occurred for two specifically named people: Hymenaeus and Alexander. Hymenaeus is mentioned again in 2 Timothy 2:17 [along with Philetus who is not mentioned elsewhere in the NT], and Alexander is mentioned again in 2 Timothy 4:14.

The verb "handed over" (*paredoka*) points to a specific action on the part of Paul. It means to "deliver up, hand down, pass on," and in this case "to Satan" the Adversary.

Indeed, the purpose of this specific action is "that they may be taught not to blaspheme." The word "taught" (*paideuthosin*) means to be "disciplined by punishment" (Ellicott, 25) – whatever form it may take. This deliverance to Satan may be in the form of excommunication and be treated like a heathen, or the "supernatural infliction of corporeal suffering" (Ellicott, 25), that is, bodily disease/s or even death. The likelihood of *death* here may be excluded for the fact that the purpose

of such action is “correction” (Alford, 312).

Gealy (395) maintains that “certainly more than excommunication is meant: misfortune or sickness would be included.”

As Harvey notes (28), “discipline, as inflicted in the apostolic churches, was sometimes accompanied by bodily evils and suffering, at least when administered by apostles; and the act of the church in administering it was thus, by miraculous intervention, attested as having the sanction of God.”

The words “not to blaspheme” is “the warning against false teaching [so] the main thought is not to speak evil of God, to misrepresent His truth” (Lock, 20). Again, the purpose of such punitive action is “correction” (Alford). As Barclay (54) adds: “it is Paul’s hope that they will be, not obliterated and destroyed, but disciplined out of their evil ways. To him, as it ought to be to us, punishment was never mere vindictive vengeance but always remedial discipline, never meant simply to hurt but always to cure.”

### III PROPER CONDUCT (2:1-3:16)

#### A. Components of Worship (2:1-15)

##### 1. Prayers (2:1-8)

2:1 – “I keep on urging, therefore, first of all to be actively practicing in behalf of all men requests, prayers, petitions, gratitudes”

As far as the appropriate components of public worship is concerned, Paul keeps on urging that there be a wide variety of prayerful interactions with God:

(1) “requests” (*deeseis*) indicates prayer for particular benefits (cp. Trench, 189) due to “a wanting, a need, an asking, entreaty, supplication” (Thayer, 126). Moulton and Milligan suggest that this word is “a strong one, even if the language of exaggeration will sometimes employ it where ‘request’ would express the sense” (137), as our translation indicates.

(2) “prayers” (*proseuchas*) refers to the general nature of prayer, although “restricted to sacred uses; it is always prayer *to God*” (Trench, 189; Vine, 882). Plus, there is always accompanying these prayers “the element of devotion” (Thayer, 126).

The first word [*deeseis*] “almost always means real asking whereas *proseuchesthai* is preferred if the fact of prayer is to be denoted with no narrower indication of its content” (Greeven, 807).

Furthermore,

the distinction between *deesis* and *proseuche* is not to be sought in the persistence or inwardness or similar features of the prayer, but solely in its content. Hence it is only with great reserve that we may distinguish and say that *proseuche* denotes prayer comprehensively while *deesis* can also have the specific sense of petitionary prayer and thus comes to have a particular nuance” (Ibid.).

(3) “petitions” (*enteuxeis*) encompasses petitions “of any kind” (Moulton and Milligan, 218). These involve petitions “to a superior” (Vine, 882) or “a lighting upon, meeting with, approaching, seeking the presence and hearing of God on behalf of others” (Vine, 607). It involves “the heart’s converse with God” (Thayer, 126). It involves “boldness of approach to God” (Trench, 190). Such “prayers must manifest concern for others and perhaps particularly for their plight or difficulty. . . appeals for the king’s [God’s] favorable response, here on behalf of ‘all’” (Knight, 114-115).

(4) “gratitudes” (*eucharistias*) embraces “the grateful acknowledgment of God’s past mercies in prayer, as distinguished from the earnest seeking of future [mercies]” (Trench, 191). It is “the gratitude of the people to their benefactor [God]” (Moulton and Milligan, 268), “always in the context of conscious expressions of thankfulness” (Knight, 115).

These various forms of prayers are so indicated that “the redeeming outreach of the gospel may be as wide as possible: no one can do anything to help another until first of all he has prayed for him. After he has prayed, there are many things he can do; but until he has prayed, there is nothing he can do except pray” (Gould, 569).

2:2 - “in behalf of kings and all who are in positions of authority, in order that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and seriousness”

The word “kings” (*basileon*) refers to those in authority “on whom other men depend, [and who frequently enjoy less opportunity of attaining the knowledge of saving truth]” (Bengel, 512). This would refer to the Roman Emperor in the early century, most all of whom were persecuting the church with utter cruelty. See Barclay (59-60) for a concise picture of various emperors and the responses of several Christians to this directive. The early church

typically prayed for these persecuting authority figures, as Paul here instructs.

The word “all” means “all *kinds* of people” (Knight, 115).

The word translated “positions of authority” (*huperoche*) occurs in the NT only here and 1 Cor. 2:1. After all, “the welfare of each nation is bound up with its government and governmental heads who have lesser officials beneath them” (Lenski, 539) and proper praying must include them.

The primary purpose of praying for all those in authority is in order that life may be properly maintained for decency and social functioning. The word “quiet” (*eremon*) means “untroubled from without” (Simpson, 40) and involves “alike a personal and a political application” (Ellicott, 27).

“To pray earnestly for those in authority could very well place in God’s hands the means for restraining from evil and misguided purposes these men who were in position to harm the Church of Christ” (Gould, 570). In the words of Harvey (29): “God may so influence the minds of those in authority as to lead to a wise and just government, thus enabling Christians to live in peace, free from turmoil and oppression, and to pursue a life right in the sight of God and honorable in the sight of men.”

In the words of E. K. Simpson (40):

No Bible-taught Christian can dispute the efficacy of believing prayer in regard to public events and their supervisors. More things are wrought thereby than this world dreams of. The supplication of faithful intercessors for the common weal lays invisible restraint on powers of darkness and their tools and brings reinforcement to honest rulers from the Governor among the nations (Ps. 22:28).

Indeed, the word “godliness” (*eusebeia*) is “the Christian religion as expressed in daily life [toward God]” (White, 103).

The word “seriousness” (*semnoteti*) denotes honesty, respectability, and “a gravity which compels genuine respect” (White, 104) toward other humans (Harvey, 30).

The word occurs in the NT only here, 3:4, and Tit. 2:7

2:3 - “This [is] good and pleasing in the presence of God our Saviour”

The word “this” (*touto*) means this kind of praying.

The word “good” (*kalon*) means “morally excellent” (Harvey, 30; Lenski, 541).

The word “pleasing” (*apodekton*) means “acceptable, right,” and occurs in the NT only here and 5:4.

The word “in the presence of” (*enopion*) “means simply ‘before’” (Knight, 119). BAG (270) notes, “*in the sight of, in the opinion of or judgment of, before.*”

God as Saviour is first mentioned in 1:1, and will occur again in 4:10.

- 2:4 - “Who desires all men to be saved and to come to knowledge of truth”

Not only are prayers designed for all, but God’s desire is also for all to be saved from the penalty, power, and eventually even the presence of sin. The way for this to occur is through knowledge which consists of truth from God and about God.

This truth, of course, is in contrast to the trickery of the false teachers. They said that one can only come to know God through the special, advanced knowledge which only a few could gain or experience through their teachings.

- 2:5 - “For [there is] one God, and one mediator between God and men, [the] man Christ Jesus”

Paul further asserts, in opposition to the false teachers, that there is only one God – *not many* – and that there is only one mediator – *not many emanations which develop over a period of time from God, and of which there are “several thousands”* (Oepke, 607) – between God and men. Furthermore, this mediator is both God and man.

The word “mediator” (*mesites*) refers to “the One who represents God to men and men to God, and brings them together. He is the attorney and negotiator who makes peace between God and man” (Oepke, 619). The word occurs elsewhere in the NT: Gal. 3:19, 20; Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24.

Furthermore, Oepke (622) observes: Christ Jesus “is not the timeless heavenly man. He is the incarnate Son of God who came into history.”

- 2:6 - “Who gave Himself a ransom for all, the testimony for one’s own times”

This giving of the heavenly man to be the God-Man in history as the mediator between God and man was a voluntary act on His

part to be “a ransom for all” is unique and without historic parallel. The word “ransom” (*antilutron*) denotes Christ Jesus as the means to effect or bring about freedom from the dominion of sin. The word is composed of two smaller words: *anti* (“instead of”) and *lutron* (“means of redeeming”). It denotes “substitution” (Dana and Mantey, 100) in that the One Christ Jesus instead of another became the one and only means by which this freedom occurred and occurs.

The expression, “the testimony for one’s own times” indicates that this testimony or bearing witness to the truth of God by Paul refers to “that unique, particular season for the proclamation of the gospel based upon the historic work of Christ on the Cross” (Wuest, 43) in the first century, and which testimony still stands as sufficient for all succeeding centuries.

2:7 - “to which I myself was appointed a preacher and an apostle – I am stating the truth, I am not lying – a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth”

It was to this purpose of bearing witness to the truth of God that Paul was “appointed” (*etethen*) or destined by God. This appointment involved both being “a preacher” (*kerus*) or one who proclaims the truth of God to others, and “an apostle” (*apostolos*) or one who was sent by God.

This almost parenthetical phrase, “I am stating the truth, I am not lying.” As Harvey (32) notes, “this protestation of truthfulness was not needed to assure Timothy, but was important in accrediting him to others as an assistant of a genuine apostle, especially in view of the opposition to Paul’s apostolic character and authority, often evoked by his assertion of the universality of the offer of salvation.”

Indeed, this universality of the offer of salvation was to Gentiles, a shocking statement to most, if not all, Jews. So, Paul includes this statement against “the Judaizing tendencies of those who may well have been critical of evangelizing non-Jews” Kelly, 65). Nevertheless, it was the basic element, drive, and direction which came to him from God. Furthermore, what he was preaching “was in the faith on Christ and in the truth of the gospel” (Harvey, 32). That is, to teach the Gentiles about and in the sphere of or in accordance with faith and truth. In a roundabout way, Paul may have intended to convey that “Christianity is ‘the true faith’” (Gealy, 402). This is the only place in the NT where Paul calls himself, “a teacher of the Gentiles.”



2:8 - “Therefore, I want the men in every place to pray lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting”

In light of these truths, Paul wants “the men,” in contrast to the women, in every place of public worship to be the ones who pray. The regulation around which men’s public prayers are to be offered is that of “lifting up holy hands” as a sign of “clean hands (morally and spiritually clean)” (Robertson, 569). In other words, “hands should be unsullied (Ps. 26:6) and the act divested of any carnal passion” (Simpson, 45). Alford adds, “those hands are holy, which have not surrendered themselves as instruments of evil desire” (317).

Paul also specifies that such prayers are free from “wrath” toward someone, and are offered without “doubting.” This doubting, of course, indicates double-mindedness and is a “disputation within one’s self” (Alford, 317) about, perhaps, the “faith and truth” within the gospel.

Plummer (98-99) states that this praying must be

in the spirit of peace and trust. Ill-will and misgiving respecting one another are incompatible with united prayer to our common Father. The atmosphere of controversy is not congenial to devotion. Christ Himself has told us to be reconciled to our brother before presuming to offer our gift on the altar. In a similar spirit St. Paul directs that those who are to conduct public service in the sanctuary must do so without angry feelings or mutual distrust.

## 2. Proper Dress (2:9-10)

2:9 - “Likewise also women [are] to adorn themselves in a respectable manner of dress, modestly and sensibly, not with an elaborate hairstyle and gold or pearls or expensive clothing”

The historical setting in which this letter and these verses was written must be taken into account for proper interpretation. Barclay’s (66-69) clarification of that setting is imperative, though a bit lengthy:

It was written against a Jewish background. No nation ever gave a bigger place to women in home and in family things than the Jews did; but officially the position of a woman was very low. In Jewish law she

was not a person but a thing; she was entirely at the disposal of her father or of her husband. She was forbidden to learn the law; to instruct a woman in the law was to cast pearls before swine. Women had no part in the synagogue service; they were shut apart into a section of the synagogue, or in a gallery, where they could not be seen. A man came to the synagogue to *learn*; but, at the most, a woman came to *hear*. In the synagogue the lesson from Scripture was read by members of the congregation; but not by women, for that would have been to lessen 'the honour of the congregation.' It was absolutely forbidden for a woman to teach in a school; she might not even teach the youngest children. A woman was exempt from the stated demands of the Law. It was not obligatory on her to attend the sacred feasts and festivals.

It was written against a Greek background. The place of women in Greek religion was low. The Temple of Aphrodite in Corinth had a thousand priestesses who were sacred prostitutes and every evening plied their trade on the city streets. The respectable Greek woman led a very confined life. She lived in her own quarters into which no one but her husband came. She did not even appear at meals. She never at any time appeared on the street alone; she never went to any public assembly. The fact is that if in a Greek town Christian women had taken an active and a speaking part in its work, the Church would inevitably have gained the reputation of being the resort of loose women.

Further, in Greek society there were women whose whole life consisted in elaborate dressing and braiding the hair. Even the Greeks and Romans were shocked at the love of dress and of adornment which characterized some of their women. The early Church did not lay down these regulations in any sense permanent, but as things which were necessary in the situation in which it found itself. We must not read this passage as a barrier to all women's service within the Church, but in light of its Jewish and its Greek background.

In commenting on regulations for the conduct of women in public worship, Paul vehemently protests against “the abuse of fashion – ***braided hair or gold or pearls or costly attire***, the high and elegant apparel of pagan women” (Hinson, 315). Paul, of course, is not against proper grooming or seeking to “encourage the defacing of womanly beauty” (Trentham, 33). He is, however, stating that a woman’s outward appearance should not be pursued as if it was her “world” or *sitz im leben* (“sociological setting or situation in life for which she functions as her very purpose in life” or her reason for being). In fact, the word translated “to adorn” is the Greek word more commonly translated “world” (*kosmos*, *kosmeo* – from which we get the English word “cosmetics”).

Rather, her outward appearance is to be one of humility “in a respectable manner of dress.” The word for “respectable” or “modest” (KJV) or “proper” (NASB) is *kosmio* means “well-arranged, becoming” (Robertson, 569). BAG (446) add, “honorable.” Vine (761) notes, “orderly, decent.” However, Trench (346) comments, “The well ordering is not of dress and demeanor only, but of the inner life; uttering indeed and expressing itself in the outward conversation.” The only other occurrence of this word in the NT is 3:2.

The two words which describe what this means are: (1) “modesty” (*aidous*) – this involves shrinking from any manner of dress which oversteps the boundaries of decency and the dishonour which could arise from “overpassing the limits of womanly reserve and modesty”(Trench, 71). It shuns “open and manifest baseness” (Ibid, 69).

(2) “sensibly” (*sophrosunes*) “is that habitual inner self-government, with its constant rein on all the passions and desires, which would hinder the temptation to this from arising, or at all events from arising in such strength as should overbear the checks and barriers which *aidos* opposed to it” (Ibid, 71-72).

2:10 - ”but what is proper for women claiming godliness, [they should adorn themselves] by means of good works”

The word “proper” (*prepei*) refers to what is “becoming” (KJV), or that which is or should be desirable for women who claim “godliness” (*theosebeian*). The word “proper” appeared first in Mt. 3:15; 1 Cor. 11:13; Eph. 5:3; Tit. 2:1; Heb. 2:10; 7:26. The word “godliness” occurs here only in the NT. It “refers to piety in general, not necessarily [limited] to acts of worship – the practice of religion that in Christianity does not require the

use of visible accouterments, as it does in pagan worship” (Liefeld, 96).

The “good works” “involve not merely avoidance of wrongdoing but a positive concern for the welfare of others. Early Christianity distinguished itself not merely toward its own constituents but even toward pagans” (Hinson, 315). In other words, “their life, not dead articles of apparel, shall be their adorning; and this living adorning comes only through the practice of good works” (Harvey, 34). In 5:10, he will itemize the good deeds which are suitable for widows.

For an exhaustive look at the NT occurrences of the expression “good works,” see my article “Good Works” in my website: [archive.org/details/@mandm313](http://archive.org/details/@mandm313).

### 3. Participation (2:11-15)

In this section of scripture, Paul elaborates further about the participation of women not only in public worship but also in other facets of their lives as Christians.

2:11 - “A woman must learn in silence with all submissiveness”

Two key words in this verse are antithetical to two key words in verse 12: “learn” versus “teach” and “submissiveness” versus “exercise authority.” It is with much significance that Paul here “lays a veto on their [women] known tendency to gabble and assume the role of teacher upon themes with which their acquaintance was slender” (Simpson, 46).

2:12 - “For I do not allow a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man but to be quiet”

The words “exercise authority” mean “by teaching, by speaking, for example, in prayer” (Bengel, 515).

The words “over a man” imply “not merely a husband, but the whole human race” (Ibid.).

Paul’s prohibition against women teaching “in the church (primarily), or, as the context shews, any where else . . . and the reason for this requirement of silence lies in the original order of creation” (Alford, 319)

2:13 - “For Adam was created first, then Eve”

Being the scriptural exegete Paul was, he places the foundation of his position on the participation of women in public

worship, in the origin of sin, and in the home squarely upon scriptural revelation.

First, Adam and Eve were not created at the same time. It was “not competitive, but concordant and counterpart” (Simpson, ’47) in nature. Nevertheless, this fact establishes the primacy of man, and some would say his primacy in creation indicates his “superiority” (Gealy, 406).

How long a period of time occurred before the creation of Eve is not known. The only known fact is “then Eve.”

It was through Eve that Adam fell. “The first time that woman taught man was when Eve taught Adam to eat the forbidden fruit.” (Trentham, 34). Indeed, the fall into sin occurred “by the woman abandoning her role and taking on that of the man” (Knight, 146).

Lenski (565) makes several observations:

The man is *not* of the woman, but the woman is *of* the man; *neither* was the man created *for* the woman, but the woman *for* the man. The fact that Adam was at once created as a male, and that thus Eve’s creation was already in the mind of God, changes nothing as to priority and headship. Jesus refers to this fact that Adam was at once created as a male as being the foundation of marriage (Matt. 19:4); yet this only the more makes Adam and the husband the head. God’s intention was that Eve was not to direct, rule, supervise him, that she was not to be the head, but he. It is said truly that priority in creation includes dignity, 1 Cor. 11:3. God could have created both at the same time; he did not do this. The whole race was to be of one blood (Acts 17:26), was to have *one* head.

2:14 - “And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman having been deceived fell into a state of transgression”

Second, sin entered creation through the back door of deceit. Eve was “the only victim of the Tempter’s deceit. She listened to the lower solicitation of sense and expedience” (Alford, 320).

The verb “deceived” (*ouk epatethe* – “not deceived” for Adam and *exapatetheisa* “was deceived” for Eve) depicts that in the temptation “her greater weakness was manifest,

in that, while Adam was not deceived, she was completely deceived by the tempter. The serpent, recognizing the greater weakness of her nature, assailed her and not the man” (Harvey, 34). Eve was the first transgressor, and became such by abandoning her role of subordination and not being in subjection to her husband, as noted above by Knight. Adam, on the other hand, sinned with his eyes wide open. He did so, apparently, “to keep her company, ceding his right to rule” (Simpson, 47). His act, therefore, sprang not from deceit but from dumbness or even stupidity. To his dismay, “Adam followed deliberately instead of assuming leadership to repel the tempter’s suggestions” (Wycliffe, 849).

2:15 - “but she shall be saved through childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and holiness together with self-restrained sensibility”

Third, deliverance from the dominion of sin is, nevertheless, possible because of several factors. The word “saved” here indicates spiritual salvation. This childbearing is the NT fulfillment of the OT promise in Gen. 3:15 about the seed of the woman, who is Jesus Christ. This is “the Incarnation” (Alford, 320).

Eve fulfills her role in Mary (Gal. 4:4) and brings salvation to the world – for herself and others.

The word “she” (singular”) is now replaced with “they” (plural) since Eve/Mary stand for the typical woman.

The word “if” indicates “the condition necessary to receive the salvation and remain in it” (Knight, 148). So, this verse “fits in well with verse 14 with its reference to Eve as showing that the Seed of the woman made salvation possible. It accords with the need for women to avoid the seductive false teachers and to ignore their teachings about marriage (4:3) and instead to live normal lives, bearing children” (Liefeld, 103).

As Gould (377) so beautifully expresses it:

Paul is thinking of motherhood in the context of the Christian faith. A Christian mother who possesses the essential qualities of ‘faith and love and holiness, with modesty’ can make a priceless contribution to the work of Christ; and marriage that is sanctified by these hallowed virtues contributes a degree of strength and health to the Church which is absolutely essential to her well-being.

“When the Lord leads a woman to be a homemaker, wife, and mother, she may well believe that to keep the home and to continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety is a loftier work for her even than being a leader in the church” (Trentham, 34).

B. Characteristics of Leaders (3:1-13)

1. Bishop/Overseer/Pastor (3:1-7)

Leadership is a necessity where people and purposes are defined, delivered, and develop in relationship with one another. Jesus became the leader of twelve men. He called them, shared His life with them, trained them, organized them, and charged them to continue carrying out His mission of ministry. Bishops/Overseers/Pastors are the leaders He has called to do the same in His name.

There are three overlapping, interlocking terms in the NT for the same leadership office or position:

“bishop” (*episkopos*) – “elder” (*presbyteros*) – “pastors” (*poimen*).

The latter term occurs in the plural and only once in the NT: Eph. 4:11.

The main idea of this single term is that of feeding the sheep through preaching and shepherding.

The term “elder” primarily denotes the function of caring for and building relationships with people. It is found in this letter in 5:1, 2, 17, 19; Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23; 16:4; 20:17; Heb. 11:2; James 5:14; 1 Pt. 5:1, 5; 2 John 1; 3 John 1.

The term “bishop” occurs only four other times in the NT: Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:7; and 1 Pt. 2:25. The primary function is that of overseeing or administering.

So, the function or work of this particular office is a multi-faceted ministry where the various responsibilities interlock and relate.

The following list of qualifications for this office center around: (1) a strong emphasis upon the spiritual life; (2) adeptness in interpersonal relationships; (3) skills or the ability to communicate; (4) love for people.

3:1 - “It is a faithful saying: If someone earnestly aspires to office of bishop, he desires an excellent work”

The words “it is a faithful saying” (*pistos ho logos*) occur here for the second time (1:15) and mean “the saying is dependable.” They occur also in 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8.

The word “earnestly aspires” (*oregetai*) means “to be eager for, long for.” It means “to reach out after something” (Robertson, 572). It occurs also in 6:10; Heb. 11:16.

The word “office of bishop” (*episkopes*) means “over-seership as in Acts 1:20” (Robertson, 572). In the words of Thayer (243), “the overseer or presiding officer of a Christian church.”

The word occurs only two other times in the NT: Lk. 19:44; 1 Pt. 2:12 and is translated “visitation” (KJV).

The verb “desires” (*epithumei*) means “to passionately long after” (Wuest, 52).

The words “excellent work” (*kalou ergou*) mean “not merely a good position or dignity, but a good *work*; an occupation which is morally excellent, alike in its object and in its exercise, a vocation worthy of one’s aspiration, in the beneficence and grandeur of its purpose and in the purity and excellence of its nature” (Harvey, 37).

- 3:2 - “Therefore, the bishop must be above reproach, husband of one wife, self-controlled, sensible, well-behaved, hospitable, able to teach”

The word “bishop” (*episkopos*) is “a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, *any curator, guardian, or superintendent, head or overseer of any Christian church*” (Thayer, 243).

The word “above reproach” (*anepilempton*) means one that cannot be blamed, censured, or disapproved. Trench (382) adds, “nothing which an adversary could take hold of, on which he might ground a charge;” Thayer (44) notes, “*that cannot be reprehended, not open to censure, irreproachable.*”

“husband of one wife” (*mias gunaikos andra*) means “one wife at a time, clearly” (Robertson, 572). That is, monogamy. It indicates “that the Christian leader must be a loyal husband, preserving marriage in all its purity” (Barclay, 76). It is a prohibition against “polygamy” (Simpson, 50).

The word “self-controlled” (*nephalion*) means “*temperate in the use of wine, sober*” (BAG, 540). It also means “*watchful and vigilant*” (Barclay, 79). The word occurs elsewhere in the NT: 3:11; Titus 2:2.

The word “sensible” (*sophrona*) means “*prudent, thoughtful, self-controlled*” (BAG, 810). The word occurs elsewhere in the NT: Titus 1:8 [esp. of women *chaste, decent, modest* – Ibid]; 2:2, 5.

The word “well-behaved” (*kosmion*) first appeared in 2:9 which see for meaning. Barclay adds, “it is commonly used to describe the man who is a good citizen. This word has more in it than simply good behaviour. It describes the man whose



life is beautiful and in whose character all things are harmoniously integrated” (81).

The word “hospitable” (*philoxenon*) means “kind to guests” (Beck) or “given to hospitality” (KJV). It describes one who has “an open heart and an open home” (Barclay, 81). This was especially true in the early church where preachers and teachers travelled and needed a place to rest and recuperate.

It occurs elsewhere in the NT: Titus 1:8; 1 Pt. 4:9.

The word “able to teach” (*didaktikon*) means “one qualified to teach” (Robertson, 572). As Bengel notes, “this implies not only competency and readiness in teaching, but even especially patience and diligence” (549). Its only other occurrence in the NT: 2 Tim. 2:24.

- 3:3 - “not a drunkard, not a quick-tempered or violent man, but gentle or considerate, peaceable or peaceful, not greedy for money”

The word “drunkard” (*paroinon*) means “addicted to wine” (BAG, 634). According to Moulton and Milligan (496) it carries the idea of “‘too much wine’ [in which case it may lead to] assault with drunken violence.” Thayer (490) adds, “one who sits long at his wine, *given to wine, drunken*; in the secondary sense, ‘quarrelsome over wine; hence *brawling, abusive*.’” The words “not a quick-tempered or violent man” (*me plekten*) means “not a giver of blows” (Gould, 58) or a “striker” (KJV) or “one who carries a chip on his shoulder, is ready with his fists” (Lenski, 585). It denotes not being a “*pugnacious man, bully*” (BAG, 675), that is, not having the habit of fighting or being quarrelsome.

The word “gentle, considerate” (*epieike*), is “a suavity and affability of demeanour” (Simpson, 51). It means “*yielding, gentle, kind*” (BAG, 292). It carries the idea of being “patient” (KJV) which means “not so much the ability to keep one’s temper under control as the ability to endure when the pressure is on, with an unfailing spirit of gentleness and forbearance” (Gould, 582).

The word “peaceable, peaceful” (*amachon*) means “peaceable” (BAG, 44) or “*placable or inoffensive*” (Simpson, 51) and also indicates “one who never fights, who is not of the fighting kind” (Lenski, 585)..

The word “not greedy for money” (*aphilarguron*) denotes not being a “money-grubber” (Simpson, 50). After all, “it was the bishop’s responsibility to care for the church’s funds. Here

would be a constant source of temptation for an avaricious man. Only one who gave every evidence of complete deliverance from a spirit of covetousness could safely be set apart for the work of the ministry” (Gould, 581).

- 3:4 - “one who manages his own household well, having children in control, together with proper conduct”

Here Paul stresses the essential ability of a bishop to “manage” (*proistamenon*) domestic matters. That is, he is to “be a good leader; having authority over, care for, give help to” family life. He is to “*be at the head of, rule, direct, be concerned about, care for, give aid*” (BAG, 713-714) to his immediate family.

Paul singles out “parental discipline” in particular. Gould (582) amplifies:

Many a minister has had his usefulness impaired or even destroyed by his failure to exercise parental discipline. It is easy to become so involved in saving the children of others that we allow our own to slip out of our control. Admittedly, there comes a time when one’s children grow up and must assume the direction of their own lives; and when this time comes, no one can prevent them making whatever choices they may see fit. But firm, loving, and prayerful discipline during the formative years of our children’s lives will surely be a mighty determining factor with them when they must finally decide for themselves the course they will follow in life.

Thus, it is imperative that the bishop never neglects his responsibilities of home life. “He must rear a respectful family, one which out of love acknowledges his authority. This pattern of love is absolutely essential because so much of the Christian gospel moves around the family relationships.” (Trentham, 41).

The reason for this is expanded in v. 5.

- 3:5 - “for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how shall he take care of the church of God?”

Again, “if a pastor’s family is disorderly, then the gospel he

preaches is vitiated, or set at naught, by his example” (Trentham, 41).

This verse does not represent a transition from the least important to the greater important. Rather, it is a corollary concept or something proved by inference from something else already proved. As Noyes (413) observes:

The Christian home is one of the finest flowers of the Christian life and there is no greater service that a Christian leader can give than to establish and guide such a home. The Christian vocabulary is derived from the family relationship, calling God ‘Father,’ Jesus ‘the elder Brother,’ a Christian society a ‘brotherhood,’ and heaven our ‘eternal home.’

Therefore, “the ‘great family’ approximates its ideal when inferiors are happily submissive and superiors exercise their authority firmly but gently and inconspicuously. Since the father stands at the apex of the system, its success or failure both depends on and tests his ability” (Gealy, 413).

Indeed, the word “take care” (*epimelesetai*) means to “look after” church matters, and in many respects, will tend to do so with people in the church as he has done with people in his own domain of homeward oriented responsibilities.

As Liefeld (120) clarifies, “The more extended households in first-century society, which included children, other relatives, and slaves, required strong household management skills. In the parallel sociological unit, the church, the leadership skill cited is to ‘take care of.’” The duties of managing and taking care of involve “looking after” others with utmost concern, conscientiousness, and Christ-oriented guidance. This is imperative for one’s own family and “the local church described as belonging to God” (Robertson, 573). In a sense, both belong to God.

3:6 - “not recently converted, lest having been swollen with pride, he may fall into judgment of the devil”

The prohibition of a recent convert being qualified for being a bishop is here declared, and that with reason. A recent convert’s disqualification is “not to be taken in the physical sense as referring to too young a man but in the spiritual sense” (Lenski, 587). Indeed, “the warning is not against doctrinal immaturity, serious as that would be, but against the danger of a character flaw,

‘conceit’ [which] comes from spiritual immaturity, not from moral depravity” (Liefeld, 121).

The “judgment of the devil” is “the same condemnation into which the devil fell, *being lifted up*, at the very beginning of his most glorious state, like a novice” (Bengel, 519). Pride was consequential and the cause of his condemnation.”Throughout Scripture, as in 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6, the fall and condemnation of angels appear as originating in a pride which led to self-will and rebellion; and the new convert, suddenly elevated to a post of distinction in the church, was in danger thereby of a self-conceit that might lead to his destruction” (Harvey, 40). Cp. Prov. 16:18.

This is echoed in 5:22.

Hinson (318) suggests two possible ways to understand this condemnation: “(1) that he would suffer the same judgment as the devil suffered when he was puffed up with conceit, i.e. expulsion from heaven, or (2) that he would be put into the hands of the devil for judgment like Job was . . . Favoring the second is clearer sense of the next sentence (v. 7).

Knight (164) raises the question as to whether this judgment is what the devil received or gives?

When one correlates ‘conceit’ or ‘pride’ with falling into judgment, the OT passage that has just been in Paul’s mind in 2:13-14, namely Genesis 2 and 3, particularly Gn. 3:14, 15, would seem to provide the background for our text. In Genesis the serpent receives condemnation because he tempted Eve to be like God (Gn. 3:5). That act reflected his own previous pride, arrogance, and enmity against God. In the light of all these considerations, [what the devil received] is more likely [the way to understand this verse].

3:7 - “and he must also have a good witness from the outsiders, in order that he may not fall into reproach and snares of the devil”

Here Paul is consistent with his other noted concerns about the witness or testimony of those outside the church in 1 Cor. 10:32; Col. 4:5; 1 Thess. 4:12.

“The most common criticism of the church by **outsiders** is directed against the so-called ‘inconsistencies of Christians.’ No one will ever in this world be a perfect Christian but whenever the hostile critics of the church can use the moral failures

of church leaders as ammunition against the church, such churchmen have fallen into what this writer calls the **snare of the devil**" (Noyes, 414-415).

"the snare of the devil" – "the devil seeks to devour the disciple who is weak in the faith by *afflictions* (Hervey, 52).

"The minister's own moral power is weakened if he is conscious that his course of life has been such as to alienate from him the confidence of the community" (Harvey, 40).

"The Christian minister must command the respect and confidence of the community outside the church if he is to win others from that community. . . no man should be indifferent toward his reputation in his community. He should desire fervently that others regard him as completely beyond reproach" (Gould, 583-584).

Both verses 6 and 7 "seek to protect both the man and the church's leadership from self-righteous pride and cowardly disobedience. To avoid both demands a mature believer with an established reputation" (Knight, 166).

## 2. Deacon (3:8-13)

The list for deacons overlaps the list for bishops, indicating how closely interrelated the two offices were. Both say little about *duties* but rather focus on *personal characteristics*.

3:8 - "Deacons likewise serious, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine"

The word "serious" (*semnous*) means "worthy of respect; men of high principle (cp. Phil. 4:8; Tit. 2:2) (Hinson, 319).

The word "double-tongued" (*dilogous*) means "men of principle" (New English Bible); "dignity . . . inviting reverence" (White, 114). "Because they had to deal with all classes, all ages, all types of people in their work, sensible, steady men were needed" (Lenski, 594).

The words "not double-tongued" (*me dilogous*) means "not saying one thing and thinking something else, or says one thing to one person and another to someone else" (Hinson, 319). This also involves "tale-bearing or character assassination" (Gould, 585).

"This is bad in any person; it would be especially bad in an officer of the church, who had constant rounds to make and would talk with many members" (Lenski, 595).

The words "not addicted to much wine" (*me oino pollo prosech-*

*ontas*) means one who does not drink to excess. This “does not forbid the use of wine, the common drink of the day, but the love of too much of it” (Lenski, 595).

The words “not greedy for gain” (*me aischrokerdeis*) means to avoid greediness (i.e., lovers of money – Tit. 1:7). This forbids “the setting of gain before one as an object in entering the ministry or the acquisition of it, rather than the glory of God, his prime object” (White, 115). That is, “like pilfering Judas. The point of the disgracefulness of such an act whether it be by embezzlement of the alms entrusted for distribution or by otherwise currying favors for mercenary ends” (Lenski, 595).

- 3:9 - “holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience” - The word “mystery” (*musterion*) means the eternal purpose of God which has been hidden but now is revealed in Jesus (cp. Col. 1:26-27)” (Hinson, 319). It is “a synonym for Christianity.

Any man who is not careful of the truth, or who is enamored of wine, or who allows money to stick to his fingers, cannot hold to Christianity, to this blessed mystery of the faith, in connection with a clear conscience, and is certainly not the man to be made a deacon in the congregation” (Lenski, 597).

The words “a clear conscience” (*kathara suneidesei*) means free from feelings of guilt as a consequence of God’s grace (cp. 1:5, 19; 1 Pt. 3:21). This encompasses “utter sincerity and without mental reservations” (Gould, 586) – i.e., spiritual integrity.

- 3:10 - “tested” refers to a trial period of caring for the needy, visiting the sick, comforting the bereaved. The words “beyond reproach” means “proven worth.” As Gould (586) points out, “we must insist upon spiritual maturity and educational qualifications; but we insist equally that a man must have carried on with a promising measure of success in some practical phase of the ministerial office. And no candidate should receive the church’s ordination who has not, in the apostle’s words, been **found blameless.**” That is, “until a man has proved his suitability – one whose fitness is a matter of common knowledge” (White, 115).

- 3:11 - “women” – This refers either to deaconesses or wives of deacons. White points out that “they performed for the women of the early church the same sort of ministrations that the deacons did for the men” (115).

The word “serious” is the same one in v. 8.

The words “not malicious gossips” (*me diabolous*) means to not

be slanderers or double-tongued (Hinson, 320).

The word “temperate” (*nephalious*) means “self-controlled, sober, sensible.”

The words “faithful in all things” indicates “entirely trustworthy” (Hinson, 320).

3:12 - “husband of one wife” refers to monogamy as opposed to polygamy which was commonly practiced by the Jews and Greeks. The words “good managers of children and their own household” denotes that they “preside well over his own household” (Harvey, 39).

3:13 - “good standing” refers to “the position of respect attained by good service; an assured position in the esteem of their fellow-Christians or gain in the eyes of God” (White, 115). “great confidence” is that which “arises from commitment to or trust in Christ Jesus” (Hinson, 321).

C. Concern for Writing (3:14-16)

3:14 - “I am writing these things to you (although I expect to come to you in the near future –

Although delayed in the writing process, in these three verses Paul states his main reason or purpose in writing to Timothy. Even though he had expectations that he would see him in person in the near future, he, nevertheless, thought it best to give Timothy these instructions in writing. Perhaps, he did so with the expectations that such instructions could be elaborated upon or adjusted to fit each pastoral setting or situation. Perhaps, he did so also so that Timothy would have time to reflect upon them and have questions formulated in advance for when Paul arrived for personal dialogue.

3:15 - “and if I may be delayed) in order that you may know how people ought to conduct themselves among the household of God which is the church of the living God, pillar and foundation of the truth ”

Paul continues with his parenthetical phrase from v. 14 and admits, without specifications, that a delay might occur. Then he continues with his expressed purpose in writing.

These instructions are not mere simply suggestions but are loaded with extreme urgency concern “with the proper conduct of members of the church, which he calls the household of God. The church is the living family of the living God and as such cannot be a static institution, dot-

ing on its past traditions. Rather must it be a vital, aggressive, spiritual organism, assaulting all the deeply entrenched evils of earth in the name of the living God” (Trentham, 49).

Paul reenforces the superlative significance of his writing with the added exclamation about the church being the (1) “pillar” (*stulos*) of the truth, which means a “display . . . the Church’s duty is to hold up the truth in such a way that all men may see it” (Barclay, 89); and (2) “foundation” or “support” of the truth. That is, “in a world which would often gladly eliminate unwelcome truth, the Church supports it against all who would seek to destroy it” (Ibid.). As Noyes (420) points out:

Truth is of God, and from one point of view needs no human defense or support. But just as God, who needs no help from men, in the mystery of his providence has made men his fellow workers in the world, so he has entrusted the truth revealed in Christ to his church. Historically it has been the church through which Christ’s truth has been transmitted from generation to generation. Actually, it is the church which is the **bulwark of the truth** in the world today. Those who wish to see the truth as it is in Christ prevail, and at the same time ignore the church which is the **pillar and bulwark of the truth**, are defying history and closing their eyes to present fact.

Despite the many disagreements among churches; despite denominational differences and theological alternatives as to what truth is, Clarence T. Craig (41) has listed seven points of basic agreement as far as “truth” is concerned:

We all believe that the Church is God’s Creation, not man’s; that the redemption of this people centers in God’s act in Jesus Christ; that the Church is marked by the presence of the Holy Spirit; that the Church has been set apart in holiness as a worshiping community; that the Church is related to two worlds – of forgiven sinners who are at the same time heirs of the Kingdom of God; a ministry which is equipped by God with various gifts of the Spirit; that the Church is one in very nature.

3:16 - “and undeniably, great is the mystery of godliness: who has been manifested in human form, declared righteous by [the] Spirit, seen by angels, preached among nations, received faith while in [the] world, taken up in glory”



In fact, in this verse, Paul himself itemizes six essential features of what “truth” is, and is here termed “the mystery of godliness” – an equivalent to “the mystery of the faith” (3:9): (1) “who has been manifested in human form” – the human nature in the Incarnation; (2) “declared righteous by [the] Spirit – the divine nature as in the Resurrection: Rom. 1:4; Acts 2:36; 3:14; 5:31; 7:52; 22:14; 1 Jn. 2:29; Rev. 16:5; (3) “seen by angels” – at His birth, His temptations, His agony in Gethsemane; (4) “preached among nations” – preaching of the gospel; (5) “received faith while in [the] world” – faith responses to Him during the days of His flesh, as well as the spread of the gospel in Acts, etc.; (6) “taken up in glory” – the Ascension and Exaltation.

#### IV PERTINENT COMMENTS (4:1-16)

##### A. Correction of Errors (4:1-11)

4:1 - “Now the Spirit is speaking specifically that in [the] last critical moments of time, some shall themselves desert or go away from the faith by continuously paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons”

Since “the Spirit” is the Spirit of God, then it is the ongoing, divine authoritative utterances (“speaks” in the present tense) of God Himself. This is no preferential perspective offered from Paul’s own personal persuasion about the matter at hand. It is the certain, compelling communication from the Spirit of God.

Furthermore, the word “specifically” (*hretos*) assures the readers that what the Spirit is now unfolding is no general, vague, tentative list of suggestions which are open for church approval or disapproval. Rather, it is the concrete, particular warning which is parallel with or in conjunction with what Jesus Himself said in Lk. 8:13: “. . . they fall away.”

Indeed, the word here translated “desert or go away” (*aphistemi*) is the same word “fall away” in Lk. 8:13. It “connotes the serious situation of becoming separated from the living God after a previous turning towards him, by falling away from the faith” (Bauder, 608). Cp. Heb. 3:12: “Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God.”

“The implication in its use here is not simply that they carelessly fall away, but that they abandon or “renounce” (NRSV) the faith that they formerly held” (Liefeld, 149).

Two other particulars are here noted: (1) “in [the] last critical moments of time” (*kairois*) which means “time viewed as an occasion rather than an extent; appointed or proper season, age, the last times.” This means, as

Knight, 188-189) points out:

the days inaugurated by the Messiah and characterized by the Spirit's presence in power, the days to be consummated by the return of Christ. . . . The NT community used futuristic sounding language to describe the present age. Therefore, Paul is speaking about a present phenomenon using emphatic future language characteristic of prophecy.

This is the same meaning as the words in Heb. 1:2: "in these last days" (*ep' eschatous ton hemeron touton*) where God is said to have spoken His ultimate and everlasting truth "in His Son."

(2) The other particular is the cause of the "falling away from the faith." That is, "continuously paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons." This is the only occurrence of this phrase in the NT. It refers to "spirit beings whose wickedness is characterized as" (Knight, 189) "*deceitful, leading astray [planois]*" or "*deceitful spirits*" (BAG, 672) The words "teachings of demons" (*didaskaliais daimonion*) denotes "teachings proceeding from or inspired by demons. The working of these evil spirits is here specially concerned with striking at the true teachings which underlies godliness" (Vincent, 244). Again, a summary of these heretical teachings is noted on page 2.

4:2 - "by hypocritical liars [who are] in a state or condition of being branded [by Satan] with an insensible conscience [unable to distinguish between right and wrong]"

The human teachers through whom these deceitful spirits and teachings of demons is being carried out are now tagged: "hypocritical liars" (*hupokrisei pseudologon*) – "hypocrisy of liars" (NASB; Beck) – "pretensions of false teachers" (Williams). The word *pseudologon* occurs here only in the NT. Robertson (578) quotes Parry that the word refers to "liars on a large scale."

Such liars are further identified as "having been and still being in a state or condition of branded" (Perfect tense denoting existing results) [by Satan] so as to indicate his ownership of them. The word translated "branded" (*kekausteriasmenon*) is where we get the English word "cauterized" which means "to render insensible; deaden the feelings of." Thus, the above translation and bracketed indication: "an insensible conscience [unable to distinguish between right and wrong]."

Indeed, "one's own conscience" (*ten idian suneidesin*) refers to the ordinarily sensitive and selective determiner of proper or appropriate choices in decision-making. Therefore, the deceptive nature of sin has so twisted or contorted "their own moral evaluator" (Knight, 189)

that is rendered null and void of its God-intended role.

- 4:3 - “[hypocritical liars] who are forbidding to be married, to abstain from certain food, which God created to partake of with thanksgiving by those with faith and who know the truth”

Two specific components of the heretical teachings are now noted: (1) “forbidding to be married” (*koluonton gamein*) – Since their teaching held that all matter is evil, including the human body, then anything which pertained to the body was basically evil. Marriage must be avoided and asceticism (unusual or extreme self-denial in order to be in conformity to the will of God; all pleasures and comforts must be forsaken) must be adopted. (2) “to abstain from certain food” (*apechesthai bromaton*) – This word “food” was just a general word for eating, so these liars apparently “selected some and rejected other types of food” (Liefeld, 150) to be used in their evil teachings. As to exactly which food was permissible and impermissible is not clear. After all, even these liars had to eat some type of food to stay alive.

Towner (104-105), therefore, suggests that “vegetarianism seems to be” an appropriate or acceptable position on the matter.

The issue of exemption from the evil teachers/ings applies to “those with faith” – children of God – and “who know the truth” – about such unnecessary restrictions and stipulations by these liars.

- 4:4 - “because what God created [is] good and nothing rejected while being received with thanksgiving”

The basis or foundation of truth about marriage and food lies in the very creative work of God. This indicates an acknowledgement of God’s activity in providing for mankind’s need, as well as utter dependence upon Him. The liars were obviously not thankful – a sin which Rom. 1:21 regards as forming the very basis or foundation of rebellion against God.

- 4:5 - “for it is being sanctified by [the] word of God and prayer”

Although in a somewhat different context or setting, Paul now sets forth the lesson which Peter learned that no food is to be rejected as being unclean or improper to eat (Acts 10:15). After all, it is “being sanctified by [the] word of God” in the sense that our connection with God takes place because of His word to us, or one of the means by which our communion with God occurs. It may refer initially to His spoken word in creation (Genesis 1), or to select words from the word of God used in connection with thanksgiving (Psalm 103:2; 145:15-16). It may simply denote the blessing of God, in accordance with His word, upon the food.

Prayer may be regarded as one of the ways by which we initiate or instigate (in a positive manner) our connection or communion with God. Paul, therefore, maintains that the combination of thanksgiving, the Word of God, and prayer “render the food legitimate to eat” (Liefeld, 152).

As Hinson (323) observes: “God himself consecrates the food anew, as if by a fresh act of creation. The fact is, he continues his creative activity always; in prayer we participate with him in this activity and enjoy its benefits.”

Demons prefer to contradict God. Liars regard their lies as truth. Their teachings must be isolated and annihilated, all in accordance with Paul’s follow-up in v. 6.

- 4:6 - “By pointing out these things to the brethren you shall be a good servant of Christ Jesus, continually being nourished on the words of the faith and of the proper teaching you have followed and still are following.”

Verses 6-11 form a unit about the importance of pastoral supervision and direction for the Christian brotherhood or family of God.

The verb “pointing out” (*hupotithemenos*) means “to place before, point out.” Its only other occurrence in the NT is Rom. 16:4. BAG (856) indicates it means to “*lay down, risk something; suggest, enjoin, order someone (to do) something; make known, teach something to someone.*” Vine (752) adds, “put into one’s mind.” Thayer, (645) adds, “*to supply from one’s own resources.*”

By doing so, Paul offers encouraging words, “you shall be a good servant of Christ Jesus.” The word “servant” (*diakonos*) is not used here in the sense that it was in 3:8, 12 for “deacons.” Here it denotes “the broader sense of ‘ministrant’ or ‘minister’; appointed by or belonging to Christ, the benefit of which work accrues to the brethren” (Lenski, 627-628).

The present tense, passive voice participle “continually being nourished” (*entrephomenos*) denotes the manner in which Timothy will be a good or excellent minister. The word “continually being nourished” occurs here only in the NT. It indicates “to train up, nurture” (Vine, 800). Alford (338) states, “**ever training thyself in the words of the faith** (the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel).” Timothy had “received good instruction, and with thorough understanding of it, had thus far carefully followed it” (Harvey, 52). The word “followed” is in the perfect tense, thus denoting a diligent, conscientious, dedicated, consecrated present state or condition of having followed and still following.

- 4:7 - “and keep on having nothing to do with the fables which are godless and foolish tales by old women; but keep on disciplining yourself toward godliness”

The present tense imperative verb “keep on having nothing to do with” (*paraitou*) means to “*keep away from; refuse to hear.*” In this case, it refers to “fables which are godless and foolish tales by old women.” The word “fables” (*muthos*) is where we get the English word, “myth.” It refers to “the fictions [inventions, falsehoods] of the Jewish theosophists [system of philosophy and religion that claims to have a special insight into the divine nature through spiritual self-development] and Gnostics, especially concerning the emanations and orders of the aeons” (Wuest, 70 - see “Gnosticism” on pg. 1).

These “fables” are “godless” (*eusebeian*). As Trentham points out, “doctrines which insist on abstinence from marriage and certain foods are godless in that they have grown up in the foolish minds of men. Although they pretend to be religious, in reality they have nothing to do with the religion of Christ (55).

The word translated “foolish tales by old women” (*graodeis*) occurs only here in the NT. It indicates that “they were senseless, silly, absurd – the mere crowing of women who had reached the anility [a much stronger word than **senility**, tending always to convey a definite feeling of contempt; weak-minded, childish] of second childhood” (Harvey, 52).

The second present tense imperative verb “keep on disciplining yourself” (*gumnaze seauton*) is an athletic expression denoting strenuous effort to reach a goal; “training for gymnastic exercises” (Hervey, 70). In fact, our English word *gymnastic* is a transliteration of this Greek word. This word occurs only three other times in the NT: Heb. 5:14; 12:11; 2 Pt. 2:14. It depicts a marked contrast with the asceticism of the “liars.”

In point of fact, White (124) calls this “an intentional paradox. Timothy is to meet the spurious asceticism of the heretics by *exercising himself in the practical piety of the Christian life.*”

Therefore, this is a call for the perpetual active practice of expended energy “toward godliness” in the Christian warfare. The word “godliness” (*eusebeian*) denotes “*reverence, respect, piety towards God*” (Thayer, 262). Vine (502) suggests it means “characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him. . . . that which is consistent with godliness, in contrast to false teachings.”

- 4:8 - “for bodily discipline is toward little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things holding promise for the present life and the future”

The words “bodily discipline” (*somatike gymnasia*) may be referring broadly to any type of physical exercise which has “little profit” (*oligon ophelimos*) or limited help, benefit, or aid because it is only beneficial in this present life.

Or, it may be referring to “the ascetic discipline rejected in vss. 1-5, and that ‘of little value’ really means ‘of no value at all’” (Gealy, 429). The value, profit, help, benefit, or aid from exercising oneself in godliness, however, is of superlative significance because it exceeds the boundaries of earth and delivers a matchless “promise” not only for the present life but also the future life. As Noyes (430) points out:

The linking of life on earth and the future life is significant. In a sense that is inevitable, as is suggested by the words finite and infinite, temporal and eternal, the world and heaven. But they are two parts of one whole, and each demands the other. Agnosticism looks at this world without a dynamic faith in the eternal world. . . . Other-worldliness looks upon this world as a vale of tears to be endured for the sake of a heavenly reward. But here godliness is represented as the way to abundant life in this world as well as the way to eternal life. Jesus spoke of eternal life in the present tense, as well as in the future. ‘This is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent’ (John 17:3). Eternal life is often regarded as having only one dimension, length. But mere existence of infinite duration is not eternal life. In the Christian sense it is four-dimensional. It has breadth – wide outlooks, far-ranging interests, inclusive sympathies. It has depth – deep and solid foundations, resources which go below the surface of life and tap the inexhaustible springs of God. It has height – fellowship with God, ‘a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens’ (11 Cor. 5:1). It has length – eternal life can begin now and never end. Our present life is the richer because of this prospect. The future life is credible because we can know the eternal Love from which neither death nor life can separate us.

4:9 - “It is a faithful saying and worthy of complete acceptance”

This is the third and final occurrence of the words “it is a faithful saying” (*pistos ho logos*) [1:15; 3:1] in this letter, and is an exact echo of 1:15 with the added words “worthy of complete acceptance” (*pases apodoxhes axios*).

These words of commendation and affirmation serve to strengthen his previous comments about the present and future value of godly discipline. These truths are reliable, trustworthy, dependable and may be accepted and appropriated without the least bit of hesitation or fear of failure.

- 4:10 - “For it is for this we keep on laboring and striving because we have cast our confidence in the living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind, more specifically of those with faith”

This verse provides an exclamation about “this” (*touto*) - the unsurpassing value of pursuing godly discipline. That value is seen in the energetic expenditure of “laboring and striving” (*kopiomen kai agonizometha*) after it or in conjunction with its aim of pleasing God.

The word “laboring” (*kopiomen*) means “laboring to the point of exhaustion” (Wuest, 71), and even weariness. It implies “arduous [strenuous] toil” (Simpson, 68).

The word “striving” (*agonizometha*) is where we get the English word “agony.” It depicts energetic expenditure which involves great suffering or struggling of both mind and body.

Both words signal the reality of “strenuous and painful effort” (Vincent, 250).

The word translated “cast our confidence” (*elpikamen*) is in the perfect tense or state or condition of existing reality. The word is commonly translated “hope,” but since there is no wishful-thinking involved in this word – as the English word commonly conveys – the translation “confidence” or “assurance” is preferred. It is a once-for-all “settled” (Wuest, 72) confidence which provides the fuel for persistent pursuits. This confidence is not in the expenditure of “laboring” and “striving” but in “the living God.” This God is not some dead idol made of wood, stone, metal, silver, or gold. He is the God of “life.” As such, He imparts life to all: “In Him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). Beyond that form of life, however, He also imparts spiritual life “to all mankind,” or “all kinds of” (Liefeld, 160) people since He is “the Saviour.”

The word translated “more specifically” (*malista*) means to be “regarded as in some way distinguishing that which follows from that which goes before it. . . . it should be understood as providing a further definition or identification of that which precedes it and thus renders it by such words as ‘that is, believers’” (Knight, 203). Thus the above translation of “specifically” or “particularly” or “exclusively” of those with faith. As Alford (340-341) phrases it: “He has made full and sufficient provision for the salvation of all: so that, as far as salvation stands in Him, He is the Saviour of all men. . . But it is only in these alone [who believe or

have faith in Him] does that universal salvation which God has provided become actual.”

4:11 - ”Continue commanding and teaching these things”

It is no wonder, then, that Paul commands Timothy to “continue commanding and teaching these things.”

The word “continue commanding” (*paraggelle*) is a present tense imperative and means to “*give orders, instruct, direct, urge, insist on*” (BAG, 618) just like you have been doing. The word first appeared in 1:3; and will occur again in 5:7; 6:13, 17.

The word “continue teaching” (*didaske*) is also a present tense imperative and means “*to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourses; to discharge the office of teacher, conduct one’s self as a teacher, to impart instruction, to explain, expound a thing*” (Thayer, 144). This word first appeared in 2:12 and will occur again in 6:2.

The word translated “these things” (*tauta*) includes the correction of errors in 4:1-10.

B. Challenges for Personal Pursuits (4:12-16)

There are eight imperative verbs in these verses. These are obviously challenging commands which serve to steer Timothy’s ship in the right direction.

4:12 - “Let no one despise your youthfulness, but be an example to those who have faith in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity”

The first imperative is a prohibitive on Timothy’s part. The way to prevent someone from looking down upon your youthfulness (30-40 years of age) is to be an “example” (*topos*) for other Christians to see and follow. Paul names five specific areas: (1) “in word” (*en logo*) – That is, the ways of “speaking to be avoided (falsehood, anger, bitterness, slander, malice, abusive speech, filthy talk) and to be sought (truth, edification, admonition, tenderness, forgiveness, and thanks, especially to God in Jesus Christ)” (Knight, 206); (2) “in conduct” (*en anastrophe*) – That is, “in deportment, behavior, course of life” (Harvey, 54).; (3) “in love” (*en agape*) – That is, that self-evasive, self-sacrificial, constant seeking the good of others, even at one’s own expense; (4) “in faith” (*en pistei*) – That is, “sincere trust in God, in prosperity and adversity” (Bengel, 525; and (5) “in purity” (*en hagneia*) – That is, being set apart by God and for God in terms of moral purity or holiness. Alford (341) says it involves “*simplicity of holy motive followed out in consistency of holy action.*”



When Timothy demonstrates these traits, features, or characteristics before others, then others will see that “it is character, not chronology that counts with God” (Trentham, 56) and should, therefore, be sufficient for them as well. To be such an “example” is the best pastoral approach in leading others to follow him and Him.

As Barclay (98) says, “silence criticism by conduct . . . Verbal defenses may not silent criticism; conduct will.”

- 4:13 - “Until I come, devote yourself to the reading [of Scripture], to the exhortation [based on Scripture], to the teaching [of Scripture]”

The words “until I come” (*heos erchomai*) apparently refer to Paul’s absence, in which case, Timothy was to be responsible for feeding the flock in Ephesus. It was as if Paul had to catch his breath, then provides three additional activities to which Timothy is to devote himself.

The word “devote” (*proseche*) first appeared in 1:4; 3:8; 4:1; and here for the last time. It is the term which indicates addiction to Christian ministry. It means to “*turn one’s mind to, pay attention to, give heed to, follow, be concerned about, occupy oneself with, devote or apply oneself to*” (BAG, 721); “*to devote thought and effort to*” (Thayer, 546); “keep on putting thy mind on” (Robertson, 581). To what is this addiction directed? (1) “the reading [of Scripture]” {*anagnosei*} – This refers to the public reading of the Scriptures with comments as part of worship. Cp. Lk. 4:16; Acts 13:15; 2 Cor. 3:14. Vincent (251) quotes Hatch: “It is probable that this practice of reading with comments . . . may account for the coordination of ‘reading’ with ‘exhortation’ and ‘teaching.’”

(2) “the exhortation [of Scripture]” {*parakleseis*} – This refers to that preaching of the Scriptures which appeals to the moral sense and which motivates the congregation to put the Scriptures into practice” (Trentham, 58). As Stahlin (774-776) informs, the word itself means “to call to, to exhort, and to comfort.” So, Timothy is to call for the hearers of the Scripture just read, and “whether in exhortation or comfort will depend on the message of the passage, but common to these two senses is the note of encouragement in this term” (Knight, 208).

(2) “the teaching [of Scripture]” {*didaskalia*} – This term “bears an unmistakable intellectual character” (Rengstorf, 160). It involves explaining in more detail the words read and the exhortation based on the reading, as far as principles of practical application are concerned. In the words of Robertson (581), “exhortation needs teaching to rest it upon.” For a fuller discussion of “exhortation and teaching,” and other spiritual gifts, see my commentary, “The Biblical Recipe for Church Functioning and Growth” on my website: [archive.org/details/@mandm313](http://archive.org/details/@mandm313).

- 4:14 - “do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the elders”

The word “neglect” (*amelei*) means to disregard, turn away from, or even outright reject the spiritual gift God gives. This word “contains the idea of contemptuous neglect – neglect as of an unimportant thing” (Hervey, 72). Thus, the prohibition is urgent!

Whatever the spiritual gift was to which Paul alludes, it is likely to be that of “exhortation” or “teaching,” as indicated by the context, perhaps, even both. Paul is suggesting “that Timothy had received this gift **by prophecy**, a repetition of the point Paul had made earlier in 1:18”

(Gould, 600).

This “prophecy” may be referring to that uttered by the Holy Spirit through the prophets at Lystra and Iconium (1:18; Acts 3:1-3; 16:2).

The “laying on of hands” means “to consecrate to a sacred office, or special religious work” (Harvey, 56).

“The elders” refers to “the presbyters in a local Church” (White, 127).

This term is interchangeable with “bishops” and “pastors” (cp. 3:1-7).

Their action of laying on of hands “was in recognition and confirmation of the Spirit’s prior action” (Gould, 600).

- 4:15 - “keep on cultivating these things, keep on devoting yourself to them, in order that your progress may be seen by all”

This positive imperative in the present tense calls for continued action in regard to “these things” under consideration. The word “cultivating” (*meleta*) means “practicing, pursuing” and occurs in the NT only here and Acts. 4:25. It denotes to “*take pains with, endeavor, meditate upon, take care* (BAG, 501). Thayer (396) adds, “*attend to carefully, be diligent.*”

Another imperative continues the thought: “keep on devoting yourself” (*isthi*) without relaxation, hesitation, or provocation. The NASB translates “absorbed”; the NIV translates, “give yourself wholly.” These and other English translations seek “to capture the total involvement and intensity of the exhortation” (Knight, 210). Bengel (526), in all likelihood, pitches an *ouch*: “He who devotes himself to them, will be less engaged in worldly convivialities; in other studies, in collecting books, shells, coins, in which many pastors, unwittingly, waste much of their life.”

The purpose of such cultivating and devoting is broadstoked in its outcome: “that your progress may be seen by all.” The intense and disciplined efforts toward godliness will not only benefit Timothy personally, but will also send smoke signals to those who are observing his behavior and how meaningful he is progressing or advancing. There

must be “no inconsistency in his life” (Liefeld, 168).), for only Spirit-led diligence will create favorable impressions “of the Lord’s servant leading a godly life under the scrutiny of others” (Ibid.); that is, from those with whom he is exercising leadership. It is imperative for desired followship.

- 4:16 - “keep on paying close attention to yourself and to the teaching, keep on persevering in them, for by doing these things you shall save yourself and those who are listening to you.”

Another imperative about Timothy himself keeping focused upon his life pertains to his being an example worthy to be followed. “Next, he is to look well to his teaching, alike as to its truth, that it be the pure word of God, and as to its adaptation and power, that his discourse be seasonable, and in manner and force worthy of the great themes he handles” (Harvey, 57). He must never be deterred from this.

The expression “you shall save yourself and those who are listening to you” means saved “from being seduced” (Bengel, 526) from the errors of the “liars.” Or, as Wuest (76) phrases it, “saved from the teachings of demon influenced men [and] saved from becoming entangled in these heresies.” Alford (343) states it will save “in the power of thine influence over them, by God’s word and ordinances.” Hervey (74) puts it this way:

The good minister of Jesus Christ must hold his course boldly and straightforwardly in the teeth of all such false doctrine. He must not parley with the teachers of heresy, nor mix the wine of the gospel with the water of falsehood. He knows that the Word of God is purer, and holier, and wiser, and higher, than all the subtleties of human invention, and will stand in its glory when they are all swept away into nothingness. And, knowing this, he must give himself wholly to teaching the truth, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear, being fully assured that in so doing he will both save himself and them that hear him.

## V PARTICULAR CAUTIONS (5:1-6:10)

It might initially appear that Paul has abruptly changed his focus away from proper conduct in relation to the components of worship, characteristics of leaders, and his overall concern for writing are concerned. Paul’s pertinent comments concerning the correction of errors and Timothy’s challenges for personal pursuits in the exercise of his leadership seem to have found a resting place, so that Paul now moves in a different

direction which has been regarded as Part 2 of his writing.

To so view this section of scripture and beyond is actually beyond the boundaries of Paul's intention. He, in fact, continues with his previous concerns and sharpens them into a more specific focus of affirmations and practical applications of truths for older men, younger men, older women, younger women, widows, elders, slaves, false teachers, and the love of money.

A. Probing Overview (5:1-2)

Timothy's role as leader is "not to govern harshly; whether those under his supervision are young or old, men or women, he is to remember that the church is the family of God (3:15); all are fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters" (Gealy, 434).

5:1 - "You may not rebuke an older man but rather you must keep on exhorting as a father, younger men as brothers,"

The word "rebuke" (*epiPLEXes*) means to "*strike at*" (BAG, 297); "*to beat upon; to chastise with words, to chide, upbraid*" (Thayer, 241). The word means to treat an older man "roughshod in the metaphorical sense of pounding with words" (Lenski, 653).

Gealy (434) stresses this is "a strong word meaning harsh or violent reproof such as anyone in authority might be tempted to employ." This word applies to a chronologically older man rather than a church officer (Bengel, 526; Harvey, 57; White, 127; Hinson, 326; Gould/Scott, 602/55; Liefeld, 174; Simpson, 72). The phrase "as a father" serves to underscore or confirm this understanding. Rather than springing from anger, arrogance, contempt, and superiority, this rebuke is to be conducted in a spirit of "*affection and respect, deference*" (Barclay, 104). Such an attitude will more likely lead to the desired and desirable outcome of their counsel, support, consideration, and influence. Failure to do so may likely lead to their resentment, opposition, lack of support, and even blocking of efforts.

The observations of Noyes (434) are lengthy but lucid (clear in intellect, sane, rational):

Experience belongs to age, as do the sense of reality born of success and failure, the wisdom that can be gained only by meeting the world, the stability of which comes from surmounting crises, the appreciation of what present privileges have cost, and the faith that has been tested and vindicated. On the other hand, older people are sometimes defeated spirits because they have striven much and accomplished so little; they are sometimes timid because so many

new experiences have turned out badly; they sometimes cling to old ways long after the time has come for something better. Old people have been known to develop pride in supposedly superior knowledge with slight foundation.

As Trentham (61) notes, “few things are more pathetic in a church than the encounter which often rages between youth and age.” Therefore, the weighing of Paul’s words here beg balance. Again, Noyes (434) strives for such:

Each generation is impatient with that which went before.  
Each generation as it becomes older is critical of that  
which follows. Each needs the other, and the world needs  
the characteristic contributions of youth and age. Youth  
brings a tired world new enthusiasm, fresh eyes with  
which to behold familiar facts, eagerness to try new ways,  
a spirit of adventure, faith in the future.

The word “but” (*alla*) is an adversative conjunction and positions one to prefer or choose an alternative, more appropriate response. In fact, this alternative is couched in a present tense imperative mood verb: “you must keep on exhorting” (*parakalei*) instead. This verb indicates to “*call to one’s side, summon to one’s aid, call upon for help; appeal to, urge, exhort, encourage, implore, appeal to, entreat, cheer up*” (BAG, 622). This verb applies equally to the others in this verse and in verse 2. The “younger men” are those of his own age group whom “he should treat as such” (Simpson, 72) – that is, “brothers.” He is not to regard them as “inferior, but as family peers and conduct himself toward them in that way” (Knight, 214).

5:2 - “older women as mothers, younger women as sisters in all purity.”

Here, in relation to older and younger women, “we have the picture of a whole family in which each one is properly considerate of the others also when one is obliged to admonish” (Lenski, 654) with exhortations.

Since Timothy is still a younger man (4:12), he is to exercise supreme caution in his exhortations and admonishing of younger women, as indicated by the words “in all purity” (*en paze hagneia*). Robertson (583) notes that “no sort of behavior will so easily make or mar the young preacher as his conduct with young women.” That is, “all admonishing is itself to be without flaw or fault” (Lenski, 654).

B. Widows (5:3-16)

Stahlin states that “the most comprehensive NT passage dealing with widows is in 1 Tm. 5:3-16 within a varied series of directions as to the way in which congregational leaders should [direct the church in the] discharge [of] their office” (453).

However, there are two types of widows in consideration: (1) Older ones (vs. 4-6, 9-10.), with vs. 7-8 addressing the responsibilities of children and grandchildren for the older ones, and (2) Younger ones (vs. 11-16).

The matters which qualify or disqualify widows for church assistance are noted here briefly and will be elaborated upon in the verses in which they are found: OLDER WIDOWS: (1) no children or grandchildren [v. 4]; (2) faithful in prayer [v. 5]; (3) avoids “riotous, luxurious living” (Robertson, 584) [v. 6]; (4) not less than sixty years old (v. 9); (5) refrained from a second marriage [v. 9]; (6) a reputation for good works [v. 10];

YOUNGER WIDOWS must be removed from consideration due to: (1) sexual satisfaction pursuits may lead to remarriage [vs. 11-12]; (2) idleness, gossiping, and meddling [v. 13]; (3) remarry and raise a family [v. 14]; (4) some unnamed sinfulness which is only speculative [v. 15]; and (5) other family members who are responsible to care for their own widows [v. 16].

5:3 - “Keep on honoring widows who are widows in need of support”

OLDER WIDOWS (vs. 4-6, 7-8, 9-10)

The present tense imperative mood verb “keep on honoring” (*tima*) calls for more than intermittent care for or attention to the needs of some widows. It denotes that this is to be a consistent pattern of provision for them. This “honouring” is more than simple mental respect. That is, “since the reference is not to all widows in the community but only to ‘real widows’ (v. 3, 5, 16), i.e., to those who have no relatives and none to care for them, and who also cannot count on remarriage, ‘honouring’ includes material provision as well” (Schneider, 179).

5:4 - “But if any widow has children or grandchildren, they should learn to practice godliness to their own family and to make some return to their own parents; for this is pleasing in the sight of God”

The emphasis here is on living descendants. The word “children” (*tekna*) encompasses immediate offspring, while “grandchildren” (*ekgova*) means the offspring of children. BAG (237) confirms this. The KJV translates it “nephews,” which was an accurate translation in 1611 but is “now antiquated” and may actually include great-grandchildren” (Moulton and Milligan, 192).

The verb “should keep on learning” (*manthanetosan*) is a present tense

imperative that children and grandchildren are to assume responsibility for taking care of the widows and maintain such. It is their “duty” (Bengel, 526-527). Indeed, “the ancient world was very definite that it was the duty of children to support aged parents” (Barclay, 106), so, Paul’s direction here was an even common cultural expectation. In the words of Simpson (74): “A religious profession which falls below the standard of duty recognised by the world is a wretched fraud.” There is no amount of religious formulations and confessions worth their salt if children seek to “evade their responsibility. . . . The New Testament ethical writers were certain that support of parents was an essential part of Christian duty” (Barclay, 106, 108).

The word translated “to practice godliness” (*eusebein*) is the verb form of the noun (*eusebeia*) used earlier in this letter (2:2 – for kings and authority figures; 3:16 – an equivalent of the faith in 3:9; and 4:7-8 – expending energy for or toward godliness in the Christian warfare). Here the verb depicts the ongoing practice of godliness by taking care of family responsibilities toward widows – “first to their own family” (*proton ton idion oikon*).

Indeed, the word “return” (*amoibas*) indicates that “their own parents” (*tois progonois*) “are the ones to whom a ‘repayment’ is to be given” (Knight, 217). This word occurs only here in the NT.

The word “for” (*gar*) indicates the reason for this dutiful care of widows. It is “acceptable” or “pleasing” (*apodekton*) to God (first used in 2:3). It is “agreeable” (Thayer, 60) to God. It is “pleasing and welcome” (Vine, 22) by God. What a motive to discharge this duty!

- 5:5 - “Now she who is a genuine widow, having been left alone and remains alone, is placing her confidence in God and continuously remains faithful in petitions and prayers nights and days”

A genuine widow is one without children, grandchildren, or other relatives to take care of her. She is “left alone” (*memonomene*), a term which appears nowhere else in the NT. She is in a sufficiently sad situation. In the words of a song, “One is the loneliest number that you’ll ever do.”

Paul further describes the ideal Christian women as one who, despite the aloneness, transforms her experience into one of prayer adoration of God, passionate intercession for others, along with expectations of appropriate care from God through others. The confidence and the constancy of her prayers are, perhaps, accompanied by her reflections and/or readings of such pertinent promises as: “He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow” (Dt. 10:18); “A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows is God in his holy dwelling” (Ps. 68:5); “The Lord watches over the alien and sustains the fatherless and the

widow” (Ps. 146:9).

- 5:6 - “but the one living in self-indulgence or luxury is dead, even though alive”

On the other hand, another type of widow is one who is constantly giving herself to pleasures, luxuriating in good times and fun, spending money on herself and, perhaps, enjoying the money being spent on her by others, and “blossoms out in beautiful dress in order to enjoy her new freedom” (Lenski, 660).

The word “self-indulgence” (*spatalosa*) occurs in the NT only here and James 5:5.

Paul says she is physically alive but spiritually dead. She, apparently, is avoiding prayers and is entrenched in various forms of hedonism or living for pleasure. Vincent (260) quotes Holtzmann: “Life in worldly pleasure is only life in appearance.”

“The implication is that the self-indulgent widow is not one who should be honored and cared for by the church” (Knight, 220).

- 5:7 - “and continue to insist on these things in order that they may be above reproach”

The present tense imperative to “continue to insist” (*paraggelle*) first occurred in 1:3 and 4:11, and will occur again in 5:7; 6:13, 17. It indicates that Timothy is to continuously pursue teaching that older widows should pursue life without pleasure, and prayerfully absorbed in praising God and petitions for others. Insistence that children and grandchildren are under mandates from God to take care of older widows must not be neglected. After all, this type concerns are acceptable and pleasing to God.

Additionally, adherence to these practical precepts will result in positive perspectives on them from others. Avoidance of these practical precepts will result in negative consequences. “Reproach would descend upon a widow who is like that one mentioned in v. 6, as well as upon children and grandchildren who fail, reproach from outsiders and still more from true church members. But the whole church itself would incur grave reproach if what Paul here writes were not preached and ordered in her midst.”

- 5:8 - “and if any one does not take care of his own and specifically of his household, this one is denying the faith and is worse than an unbeliever”  
The word “take care of” (*pronoiei*) means “to perceive before, foresee, think beforehand, provide, to take thought of, care for” (Wuest, 81; cp. Robertson, 584). This word occurs elsewhere in the NT: Rom. 12:7;



2 Cor. 8:21.

This verse is another angle from which to assess the responsibility of caring for one's own mentioned in v. 4. It provides another shot in the arm to bolster or boost the urgency of the matter. Failure to provide for one's own household is synonymous with an outright denial of the Christian faith, "for Christianity teaches love" (Hinson, 328) as an active, determined, strategic stance of meeting the needs of others.

As Vincent (260) notes, "Faith demands works and fruits. By refusing the natural duties which Christian faith implies, one practically denies his profession of faith." Indeed, as Bengel (527) observes, "Faith does not abolish natural duties, but perfects and strengthens them."

This failure would be one of gigantic proportions because even non-Christians tend to take care of their own.

- 5:9 - "Put a widow on the list (for financial aid by the church) being not less than sixty years old, wife of one husband"

This list of 8 qualifications for widows to be put on the list for financial church aid or assistance is precise or pointed: (1) at least 60 years of age; This was the age in which women were expected to be "suited for concentration on the spiritual life" (Barclay, 109); The Greek philosopher, Plato, held that this age was "best for entrance into priestly service in his ideal state" (Liefeld, 181); (2) faithful in marriage; "It has no reference to the number of times she had been married, but refers solely to fidelity to the marriage vow" (Harvey, 61). The primary idea here is that of monogamy. That is, women who had been "lawfully married, or has had one husband [at a time], or one and afterwards a second" (Bengel, 528).

- 5:10 - "having a testimony of good works, having brought up children, having shown hospitality, having washed feet of saints, having assisted those being in distress, having followed after every kind of good work"

(3) a solid and impressive reputation for being engaged in good works; White (130) notes this means "the discharge of commonplace duties, 'the daily round, the common task'"; (4) having raised children of her own; This phrase occurs nowhere else in the NT. Bengel (528) suggests this means "for the benefit of the Church." It must also carry the sense of compassion, patience, understanding, and some knowledge of stages of growth and development. This may also have allusion to the fact that "the later Church widows, among other duties, had the care of the Church orphans" (White, 131); (5) having shown hospitality to others, even "to welcome strangers" (Robertson, 584); (6) having demonstrated a servant's heart of humble service in "courtesy for weary travelers" (Hinson, 328); "To wash a person's feet was the task of a

slave, the most menial of duties. This means that Christian widows must have been willing to accept the humblest tasks in the service of Christ and of his people” (Barclay, 111); (7) assisting others in distress; i.e., “was thoughtful and helpful to the poor, the sick, the sorrowing, and the friendless” (Harvey, 61); this assisting of others in distress means “to give sufficient aid” (Robertson, 585). It occurs in the N.T. only here and verse 16; (8) diligent in diversified sorts of good works; i.e., a life characterized by interest in others, efforts to provide godly truths and behaviors to others in the form of benevolence and kindness; “of whatever sort” (Gould, 607).

#### YOUNGER WIDOWS (vs. 11-15)

In this section of scripture, Paul explains why younger widows should not be placed on the church’s list for financial aid.

- 5:11 - “But refuse younger widows [to be put on the list], for when they may be drawn away from Christ by their own sensual impulses, they desire to be married”

The word translated “may be drawn away” (*katastreniasosin*) occurs here only in the NT. It is composed of two words: *kata* (“against”) and *streniao* (“live in sensuality or luxury”). Because of their sexual desires, they will be motivated to “break their vow of celibacy” (Lenski, 671), which was required by the church to be on the list for financial aid, by getting married again. This means “they set aside the commitment they made to serve Christ as widows” (Knight; 226).

- 5:12 - “bringing about censure because they set aside or broke the previous promise”

The decision of these younger widows to remarry and set aside their “first or previous promise” (*ten proten pistin* – only here in the NT) of serving Christ as widows will bring about “censure” (*krima*). The word is translated “damnation” (KJV), “condemnation” (NAS), “guilty” (Beck). The meaning is not being condemned or damned to hell, but a “judgment” of censure or reproach upon themselves personally, and of Christ Himself, as a result of breaking their pre-enrollment promise.

In other words, in order to enroll initially for church assistance, widows were required to promise to serve Christ as widows. So, the first reason Paul mentions about refusing to provide financial or other means of support to these younger widows was one of not sticking to their initial promise. Barclay (114) provides this perspective:

It is not that younger widows are condemned for marrying again. What is condemned is this. A young husband dies; and the widow, in the first bitterness of sorrow and on the impulse of the moment, decides to remain a widow all her life and to dedicate her life to the Church; but later she changes her mind and remarries. That woman is regarded as having taken Christ as her bridegroom. So that by marrying again she is regarded as breaking her marriage vow to Christ. She would have been better never to have taken the vow.

What complicated this matter very much was the social background of the time. It was next to impossible for a single or a widowed woman to earn her living honestly. There was practically no trade or profession open to her. The result was inevitable; she was almost driven to prostitution in order to live. The Christian woman, therefore, had either to marry or to dedicate her life completely to the service of the Church; there was no halfway house.

V. 14 “makes it clear that remarriage *before* being ‘enrolled’ does not carry that inherent judgment” (Knight, 226). So, the crucial nature of the case carried with it concerns which must not be entered into lightly, slightly, or impulsively.

5:13 - “and at the same time they are also learning to be idle by going from the houses [house to house], and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, speaking forbidden things”

Another reason for refusing to put younger widows on the list for church financial assistance is that “they are learning” (*manthanousin* – present tense verb) – after having broken their initial promise – that their commitment to the Christian faith does not really have a controlling force in their lives.

So, in a shocking turn of events, Robertson states that this verb means they are learning “to learn how” (*Grammar*, 1040) “idleness” (*argai* – “unemployed, lazy, careless, useless, ineffective” – “without work” (Robertson, 586).

This idleness leads to (1) “wandering from house to house” (*perierchomenai tas oikias*) where “they pry into the state of families” (Bengel, 528). This “would be a source of temptation to young women, and would degenerate” (White, 132) into perverted practices “with all the evil dispositions and habits it engenders” (Harvey, 63); (2) being “gossips” (*phluaroi* – occurring nowhere else in the NT) or “a trifling silly talker” (Hervey, 98), “to babble, to prate against”

(Vine, 1134); those who “‘boil up, ‘throw up bubbles’ which are hollow and useless things,’ to indulge in empty and foolish talk” (Thayer, 655); (3) “busybodies” (*periergoi* – here only in the NT) are those who are “busy about trifles to the neglect of important matters” (Robertson, 586; *Grammar*, 617); the word “conveys the idea of meddlesomeness” (Simpson, 75); (4) “speaking forbidden things” (*lalousai ta me deonta*); this expression indicates that “the subject-matter, as well as form, is involved . . . his fear is that these younger widows will make mischief by bearing about tales and scandals” (Alford, 350) or things “that are not necessary” (Lenski, 675).

- 5:14 - “Therefore, I want younger widows to be married, have children, manage the household, not to give a starting-point to the opponents an occasion for reproach”

So, in light of the things Paul just stated, he provides an alternative route for younger widows to take or consider. Getting married, having children, and managing their own household, for example, would eliminate or greatly reduce any wandering tendencies. This would also potential abort any “starting-point” of opportunity for “the opponents” of the Christian faith to engage in slanderous comments or create “an occasion for reproach.”

- 5:15 - “For some have already been turned aside to follow Satan”

The fact that “some” younger widows had already violated these cautionary words of Paul led to the snares and traps of the chief opponent of the Christian faith: “Satan” – the Adversary. This words refers to being opposed to or setting oneself against God and the Christian faith. Wuest (85) suggests the word is also used “of any human being who sets himself against Christianity.”

#### A CHRISTIAN WOMAN and ANY WIDOWS (v. 16)

- 5:16 - “If any woman of faith has widows she must keep on supporting them and do not let the church be burdened, in order that she/the church may support those who are dependent”

Paul’s directive for “any woman of faith” to initiate and maintain appropriate care for any genuine widows in her family – i.e., with no children or grandchildren or other family members – is “to prevent additional burden on the church” (Liefeld, 184). Those widows who meet the qualification requirements for enrollment are the only ones to receive

such support from the church.

So, a Christian woman who has a family member who is a widow is to be the one to take charge of taking care of her. Hinson suggests that the responsibility of any Christian woman taking care of any widows “in her home” (330) may likewise be involved in this matter.

By following and/or abiding by and implementing these specific guidelines, “both family and church between them will care for widows, the family its own, and the church those with no family” (Knight, 231).

### C. Elders (5:17-25)

5:17 - “The elders who manage in an admirable manner must be regarded worthy of double honor, especially those who are engaging in preaching and teaching”

The word translated “elder” (*presbutero*) in v. 1 in reference to “older men” in the church is the same word translated “elder” here but with a different meaning. In this verse it refers to a position of management in the church. It is synonymous with the word translated “bishop” (*episkopon*) in 3:2. The word “bishop” (*episkopos*) is “a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, *an curator, guardian, or superintendent, head or overseer of any Christian church*” (Thayer, 243). Again, the terms “elders” – “bishops” and “pastors” are used interchangeably in the NT to describe different aspects of the same church office.

The word translated “manage” (*proestotes*) may also be translated “rule, lead, have authority over, care for, help.” This is clearly a reference to administrative purposes.

The adverb translated “admirable manner” (*kalos*) may also be translated “well, rightly, correctly, very well, well enough,” and encompasses the manner in which something is conducted or carried out administratively. Those who are called and equipped to serve in this position of administration “must be regarded as worthy” (*axiousthosan*) of special recognition. This present tense imperative verb indicates the ongoing, continuous treatment by the church in light of their service to the church.

This recognition and treatment are clearly identified as “double honor” (*diplēs times*). This “double honor” is here linked with the dual tasks of “preaching and teaching.” Gealy (441) says it means “double pay.”

White (134) suggests the word “honor” (*times*) should be translated “remuneration” and supports this because of the word “double” (*diplēs*) which “certainly warrants us in concluding that presbyters that rule well were better paid than those that performed their duties perfunctorily.” It clearly also implies “respect.”

Bengel (529) also advocates this understanding. Although not all

presbyters ruled or managed from the standpoint of both “preaching and teaching,” those who were serving “in sacred studies, and in the instruction of others had less leisure for working, and for acquiring fortune, and were worthy of compensation.”

- 5:18 - “For the Scripture says, **You shall not muzzle an ox while he is treading out the grain**, and the worker is worthy of his wages”

Paul’s position on this matter of appropriate compensation for those serving in this dual capacity is solidly anchored in OT scripture itself (Deut. 25:4). Trentham (66) observes: “To refuse compensation to a pastor is like placing an ox in the midst of an abundance of potential food and compelling him to do the work which makes the food useful to man, while he is denied the right to partake of the food himself.”

The phrase “the worker is worthy of his wages” was a well-known saying which yields additional support “regarding pay for church leaders” (Hinson, 331). This phrase may, in fact, be “an utterance of Christ from oral tradition, coordinately with the O.T. citation, as Scripture” (Vincent, 268). Cp. Mt. 10:10; Luke 10:7.

The word “worker” (*ho ergates*) is used 16 times in the NT – 3 times for evil worker/s (Lk. 13:27; 2 Cor. 11:13; Phil. 3:2); and 13 times for general or good worker (Mt. 9:37-38; 10:10; 2:1, 2, 8; Lk. 10:2, [twice], 7; Acts, 19:25; 2 Tim. 2:15; Jam. 5:4).

The word “worthy” (*axios*) means “deserving; in keeping with; proper, fitting.” It appeared earlier in 1:15; 4:9; and will occur also in 6:1.

The word “wages” (*misthou*) means “pay, reward, recompense; gain.” Jesus used this term to denote “payment for work done (Mt. 20:8) and states the justice of such wages – a principle of fair reciprocity” (Knight, 235).

Liefeld (194) maintains that “since the provision of needs would have been a practical expression of honor,” these two coupled quotes both undergird and declare plainly that both respect and remuneration are included, and need not be separated.

- 5:19 - “Do not acknowledge an accusation against an elder except in the presence of two or three witnesses”

The word “accusation” (*katēgorian*) occurs elsewhere in the NT: Jn. 18:29; Titus 1:6. It denotes “a charge” against someone.

Here Paul states how an accusation against an elder should be handled. The proper procedure is in keeping with that stated by Jesus. “In effect, Paul is urging Timothy to follow this procedure found in Matthew 18 and the OT before the church accepts or acknowledges as correct an accusation against an elder. The process may consist of two or three wit-

nesses bringing an accusation, but normally it would consist of two or three witnesses verifying an accusation that may come from only one individual before it is considered further” (Knight, 235).

- 5:20 - ”Those who are continuing in sin must be proven guilty before everyone in order that the rest may also be fearful [of sinning]”

This verse implies that the elder has been privately found guilty of some sin by the two or three witnesses, and chooses to continue in said sin. In that case, the elder must be “proven guilty” publicly or before the entire church body. The purpose of this public exposure is that the rest of the church body “may be deterred by their fear from committing a like offense” (Hervey, 100).

As John Stott (139) points out, “it is neither right nor necessary to make what is private public, until all the possibilities have been exhausted.”

- 5:21 - “I declare solemnly and emphatically before God and Christ Jesus and the chosen angels, in order that you may follow these things without hypocrisy, nor practicing [these things] by partiality”

The opening word is intense – *diamarturomai* – and may be translated “charge under solemn oath, warn; testify.” Paul uses it only 3 other times: 1 Thes. 4:6; 2 Tim. 2:14; 4:1. This declaration “before God and Christ Jesus and the chosen angels” is an alert and appeal to the highest basis of conceivable reality; none other has the magnitude of knowledge beyond these. Cp. Mt. 25:31; Mk. 8:38; Lk. 9:26; Rev. 14:10.

Gould (610) states: “The tone of this passage suggests that scandals may have arisen in the past by reason of preferential treatment of offenders, and the apostle would eradicate once and for all such injustice.” As Gealy (444) puts it: “there had been actual cases of discrimination, perhaps some flagrant ones, where evil men had been shielded or innocent men abused. Hence ‘Timothy’ is commanded to observe the regulations (cf. vss. 19-20) without partiality. On the one hand, judgments are not to be formed without all the facts being known; on the other, decisions are not to be bent by personal bias.”

The words “without hypocrisy” (*choris prokrimatos*) means “to judge beforehand, and occurs here only in the NT” (Robertson, 589).

The noun “partiality” (*prosklisin*) occurs here only in the NT, and means without “favoritism.” The word indicates “the failing of him who *determines, before* the matter fully develops itself. One is often actuated by some hasty impulse, and treats this or that person either well or ill accordingly; but we should act considerately, and think what suits the Divine will” (Bengel, 530).

The verb form of this word (*proskollaomai*) means “to be united,” as in

marriage, and occurs in Mt. 19:5, Mk. 10:7; Eph. 5:31; or merely “joined together” (Acts 5:36).

- 5:22 - “Do not lay hands on anyone hastily [and] do not become partners in the sins of others; you must keep yourself separated [from sin]”

The prohibition about laying hands on someone too hastily is in regard to “the sense of approval” (Robertson, 589) for the office of an elder. This prohibition springs from the possibility of someone not being properly or adequately tried and qualified for the office. Vincent (269) suggests it is “probably with reference to that rite in the formal restoration of those who had been expelled from the church for gross sins.” To ignore or flatly resist this prohibition would, in fact, place oneself in the position of condoning “the sins of the offenders, and would thus make common cause with them” (Vincent, 270). Gould (611) suggests that to “become partners in the sins of others” does not “involve guilt on their part, but it cannot fail to cause pain and grief.”

The additional imperative to “keep on keeping yourself pure,” is no small matter. After all, “the minister must be very careful not to be compromised in his stand for righteousness by endorsing men who are not worthy of his trust” (Rolston, 89). He must be “upright, honorable” (Wuest, 88).

- 5:23 - “Do not go on drinking water only, but make use of a little wine on account of your stomach [issues] and frequently occurring illnesses”

Barclay’s (120) words of wisdom are worthy of notice: “This is a text which has much troubled those who are advocates of total abstinence. It must be remembered that it does not give any man a license to indulge in drink to excess; it simply approves the use of wine where it may be medically helpful.”

The exact nature of Timothy’s recurring illnesses may not be definitively stated but was obviously in relation to some type of stomach issues. So, Paul recommended the use of “a little wine” “as a remedial agent [but] did not favor its use as a beverage” (Harvey, 68). It has long been recognized by some studies that wine can have positive effects on the digestive system.

- 5:24 - “The sins of some men are obvious, receiving immediate judgment, and [the sins of] others appear later”

As if to point out parenthetically in v. 23 that the consumption of a little wine is not a sin but rather may have desirable outcomes for his health, Paul now resumes the subject of sin in relation to being considered for



an elder.

The sins of some people desiring the office of elder are so obvious to public awareness that they need no witnesses or investigation to ratify them as such and thereby be excluded from consideration as an elder. The word “obvious” (*prodeloi*) means “openly plain, plain before all” (Robertson, 590). The only other occurrence of this word in the NT is Heb. 7:24. They are clearly violators of God’s laws, precepts, principles, and directives. They receive instant judgment or condemnation by those examining them and are excluded from consideration.

Vincent (271-272), however, offers a modified perspective.

The meaning here is that these open sins go before their perpetrator to the judgment-seat like heralds, proclaiming their sentence in advance. **Krisin**, not specifically of the judgment of men or of the final judgment of God, or of the sentence of an ecclesiastical court – but indefinitely. The writer would say: no judicial utterance is necessary to condemn them of these sins.

The sins of others, however, appear later. As Harvey (68-69) clarifies: “Their sins being concealed, stand revealed only after investigation, or by their results. Such men, under a fair exterior have a rotten character; and only careful inquiry, or the developments of time and providence, will reveal it.”

Knight (241) brings it together: “The import of this statement is that one must know some men for some time before their sins become evident, and since one wants to avoid unnecessary public rebuke and avoid participation in another’s sins, it would be best not to be hasty with any man.”

5:25 - “In the same way, the good deeds [are] also obvious, and the deeds that are different may not continually be concealed”

What is true for sins is also true for good deeds. As Alford (355) notes:

The tendency of this verse is to warn Timothy against hasty condemnation, as the former had done against hasty approval. Sometimes thou wilt find a man’s good character go before him. . . . but where this is not so, . . . be not rash to condemn: thou mayest on examination discover if there be any good deeds accompanying him: for they . . . cannot be hidden.

Gealy (445) reenforces this stance:

good and evil are forever different, and that sooner or later their true nature will be manifested. Although not all sins are so conspicuous as to ‘seem almost to drag’ men before God for judgment, and although not all good deeds are likewise conspicuous, yet even when evil is fully disguised or good wholly concealed, in the end they will be seen as they are. Some men may be worse than they seem, others better; but ultimately appearance and reality will be one.

White (139) calls this verse “an antithesis to what has gone before. . . . Sins and good works alike cannot be successfully and indefinitely concealed.” Therefore, with these words of caution, “Timothy will not likely be guilty of refusing a man who is really qualified for the holy office” (Lenski, 692). As Robertson concludes, “There is comfort here for modest preachers and other believers whose good deeds are not known and not blazoned forth. They will come out in the end” (590). So, “these facts add impressiveness to the apostle’s advice to move with caution and deliberation in the important business of selecting leaders” (Gould, 612).

D. Slaves (6:1-2)

These two verses depict the responsibility of Christian slaves to those masters who were not Christians (v.1) and those who were (v. 2).

6:1 - “All slaves who are under [the] yoke, let them regard their own masters worthy of all honor, in order that the name of God and the teaching may not be spoken against”

All slaves who were Christians are under the condition of being joined to (*zugon* – “yoke”) their human masters and “are driven by the will of their owner” (Lenski, 694) who in this case was not a Christian. The slaves “have no rights of their own” (Liefeld, 197). This spiritual dichotomy, however, does not create for the Christian slave an opportunity to resent, despise or look down upon their masters. Rather, it creates the responsibility to respect and regard them as worthy of all honor which they are due.

This rendering of “honor” is totally in keeping with the honor of widows (5:3) and the double-honor of elders/bishops/pastors (5:17).

Here, as Harvey (69) observes:

the Christian slave was not to suppose that, because of his

exalted heavenly calling, he was released from the duties of his earthly station; rather, his profession as a Christian should lead him to still higher fidelity to them, so that his master, though unbelieving, would be compelled, by his cheerful and faithful service, to acknowledge the excellence of his religion.

The word translated “spoken against” (*blasphemetai*) is where we get our English word “blaspheme, blasphemy.” “If the heathen could say that Christian slaves were not as dependable as non-Christian slaves” (Robertson, 591), the likelihood arises that “the name of God and the [Christian] teaching” would be spoken against.

- 6:2 - “and let not those having believers as masters disrespect them, because they are brothers, but rather serve as a slave, because they are believers and beloved who themselves are benefitting from your service. Keep on teaching and keep on urging these things.”

The equality of Christian brotherhood does not place the Christian slave in the position of not respecting their masters or serving them as they should. In fact, their relationship as fellow-believers and fellow-beloveds creates a mutual relationship in which each does good for the other, a reciprocal relationship.

In other words, the idea here is that “the service of a slave has now been turned into an act of bestowing good on another, even his master. . . . The brotherhood among slave and master should not encourage slaves to disrespect but rather to generosity and graciousness” (Knight, 247).

The word “benefitting” (*antilambanomenoi*) means “to take in turn, to lay fast hold of” (Robertson, 591). Its only other occurrences in the NT are: Lk. 1:54; Acts 20:35.

The word “service” (*euergesias*) means “*the doing of good or service; good deed, benefit, a kindness*” (BAG, 320). Knight (247) says “the first century associated this word with the actions of one in authority who was a benefactor toward one under him.” This perspective lends support for the idea of a reciprocal relationship. The only other occurrence of this word in the NT is Acts. 4:9

Hervey (119) provides this summary pitch: “Let not those who have believing masters think slightly of their authority because they are brethren: but let them do them extra service, beyond what they are obliged to do, for the very reason that those whom they will thus benefit are believing and beloved brethren.”

The closing words “keep on teaching and keep on urging” are in the present tense imperative mood. The word “these things” embraces the comments just made about the relationship between slaves and masters. By making “these things” the ongoing, continual content of their teaching

and urging obedience toward, Timothy will have consistently framed “the established ethical doctrine concerning slaves [and masters] in all the churches” (Lenski, 697).

E. False Teachers (6:3-5a)

- 6:3 - “If someone is teaching a different, false doctrine and does not agree with correct, well-grounded messages of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching in accordance with godliness”

Moffatt translates this verse as follows: “Anyone who teaches novelities and refuses to fall in with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the doctrine that tallies with godliness, is a conceited, ignorant creature.” The word “if” (*ei*) begins a first class conditional clause and assumes certainty or reality – not probability or possibility. That is, some actually were already engaged in teaching falsehoods which he proceeds to describe.

The word “different, false doctrine” (*heterodidaskalei*) is composed of two words: *hetero* (“another of a different kind”) and *didaskaleo* (“I teach, teaching”).

These false teachings were discordant “with correct, well-grounded messages of our Lord Jesus Christ and godliness.” They were grossly initiated “novel teachings and new fads which continually threatened to distort the true Christian message” (Trentham, 70).

The true Christian message was anchored exclusively in the solid, simple, scripturally-oriented messages or truths from Jesus Christ and about Jesus Christ. These messages of truths were concordant with “godliness” (*eusebeian*) in the sense of “promoting godliness” (Robertson, 592) or “*godly faith*” (BAG, 326).

The word “godliness” (*eusebeian*) occurred previously in this letter (2:2; 3:16; 4:7, 8; and will occur again in 6:5, 6, 11. Paul uses the term only two other times in these pastoral letters (2 Tim. 3:5; Tit. 1:1). [Its only other appearances in the NT: Acts 3:12; 2 Pt. 1:3, 6, 7; 3:11].

White (103) notes that in these pastoral letters the word “is almost a technical term for *the Christian religion as expressed in daily life*.”

It denotes “piety toward God, reverence, respect” (Thayer, 262; Wuest, 92). Vine (502) notes: “characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him.”

A kindred term *eusebes* (“devout” – Acts 10:2, 7; 22:12; 2 Pt. 2:9) may help color its meaning as “piety in the fulfillment of human relations” (Trench, 172).

- 6:4 - “being in a state or condition of conceitedness and does not understand anything, but having an unhealthy desire for controversial issues and

quarreling about words, out of which arises jealous envying, strife, slanderous, insulting talk, wicked, evil intentions”

In verses 4-5, Paul itemizes ten traits, features, or characteristics of the false teacher himself. In light of these personal traits, it is no wonder that the teachings were as deluded, distorted, and damaging as the teacher himself: **(1)** The verb “being in a state or condition of conceitedness” is a perfect tense, passive voice which denotes an existence of being swollen with pride or puffed up with intentions to display himself as the all-knowing one from whom all others should stand in awe at his utter majesty. This word occurs only two other times in the NT: 3:6; and 2 Tim. 3:4. “The word combines the ideas of conceit and folly. The rejection of the evidence of the Gospel is rooted in pride and is the utmost folly” (Wycliffe, 861). The true teacher of God, however, “does not offer men his own farthing [very little bit] of illumination; he offers them the light and the truth of God” (Barclay, 126-127). **(2)** The verb “does not understand” is another perfect tense, passive voice which conveys the same idea as the previous verb. In terms of who God is, what He desires, and what His messengers teach, these false teachers are in the dark dungeon of ignorance. As Robertson (592) exclaims, “Ignorance is a frequent companion of conceit.” The following traits reveal just how this ignorance is manifested. **(3)** The words “having an unhealthy desire for controversial issues and quarreling about words” “may well be nothing other than a mode of escape from the challenge of Christian living” (Barclay, 127); they stand in sharp contrast to words about God’s *grace*. These false teachers, however, refused to integrate the truth of *grace* in their teaching, and when this occurs, “we are no better than children in the nursery playing ‘Church’. We have, as Valentine said of Thurio, ‘an exchequer [a treasury] of words, but no other treasure’. Instead of putting off our shoes from our feet because the place whereon we stand is holy ground, we are taking nice photographs of the burning Bush, from suitable angles: we are chatting about theories of Atonement with our feet on the mantelpiece, instead of kneeling down before the wounds of Christ” (Whale, 152). The subsequently noted traits are all “products of an ignorant and conceited mind”(Robertson, 592); “these things cannot fail to destroy the Church’s unity and fellowship, grieving the Holy Spirit, and destroying the effectiveness of the gospel” (Gould, 614): **(4)** “jealousy, envying” (*phthonos*) – “prompted by envy” (Thayer, 652); “incapable of good, is used always and only in an evil, signification” (Trench, 87); “the feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others” (Vine, 377); “malice” (Moulton and Milligan, 667); **(5)** “strife” (*eris*) – “contention, the expression of enmity” (Vine, 1105); “*wrangling*” (Thayer, 249) or to argue or dispute in a noisy or angry way; “*discord, quarrels*”

(BAG, 309). (6) “slandorous, insulting talk” (*blasphemiai*) – commonly translated – or more accurately, transliterated “blasphemy,” is a word denoting “*speaking against God, slander, insulting talk.*” (7) “wicked, evil intentions” (*hupovoiai ponetai*) – indicates thoughts which are hidden (Vincent, 274), the very word *huponoiai* composed of two words: *hupo* (“under”) and *noiai* (“mind, thought”); the word indicates one’s “disposition . . . the inner orientation or moral attitude” (Behm, 958); “*evil conjectures, false suspicions*” (BAG, 854); “*su-specion*” (Moulton and Milligan, 659), and occurs here only in the NT. From a collective standpoint, all these traits indicate that the false teacher is, in the words of Barclay (128),

a disturber of the peace. He is highly competitive; he is suspicious of all who differ from him; when he cannot win in an argument he hurls insults at his opponent’s theological position, and even at his character; in any argument the accent of his voice is bitterness and not love. He has never learned to speak the truth in love. The source of his bitterness is the exaltation of self; for his tendency is to regard any difference from or any criticism of his views as a personal insult.

6:5a - “and being in a continual state of friction between men of depraved minds and deprived of the truth . . .”

(8) “being in a continual state of friction” (*diaparatribai*) is in the perfect tense and means an existing state or condition of ongoing “irritation, rubbing, *mutual* or *constant irritation*” (BAG, 186), irritations which “are mutual between men whose minds are diseased with errors” (Lenski, 701). Indeed, the word “depraved minds” (*diephtharmenon*) means “*corrupted in mind*” (Vincent, 275); (9) “deprived of the truth” (*apesteremenon tes aletheias*) is also in the perfect tense and means they are in a state or condition of spiritual deprivation. “The implication is that they once possessed the truth. They put it away from themselves (ch. 1. 19; Tit. i. 14). Here it is represented as *taken* [passive voice] away from them” (Vincent, 275). This is disinheritance. The corrupted mind leads to corrupted thinking in regard to money. Since they are “unable any longer to distinguish truth from falsehood, right from wrong” (Hinson, 333), only the sky is the limit to their twisted thought patterns.

#### F. Love of Money (6:5b-10)

6:5b - “thinking godliness to be a means of gain”

As another extension of the traits of these false teachers, it is no surprise that they “have their minds on money and money on their minds.”

(10) “thinking godliness to be a means of gain” – betrays their pretensions. Their interpretation of “godliness” (*eusebeian*) was that it was a strategic way “for procuring property” (Bengel, 532). They spelled “godliness” g-r-e-e-d-i-n-e-s-s – “a perverted concept” (Liefeld, 204), to say the least. The word “gain” (*porismos*) occurs here only in the NT. It refers to a way to make money. In essence, the false teachers actually were commercializing religion. As Barclay (128) notes: the false teacher is

out for profit. He looks on his teaching and preaching, not as a vocation, but as a career. One thing is certain – there is no place for careerists in the ministry of any Church. The Pastorals are quite clear that the labourer is worthy of his hire; but the motive of his work must be public service and not private gain. His passion is, not to get, but to spend and be spent in the service of Christ and of his fellow-men.

These false teachers were so discontented with themselves that they seek to make other people “discontented and persuade them to use religion as a means of worldly bettering themselves” also (Alford, 358).

6:6 - “and godliness is the means of great gain together with contentment”

Almost in mid-sentence, Paul pauses, perhaps, and admits that there *is gain* in godliness but it is not measured, calculated, calibrated or colored in terms of material possessions – green or otherwise.

This “gain” is “great”(*megas*) precisely because it exceeds anything merely measured from a material standpoint. It moves one from discontentment to contentment of the highest magnitude. This gain of contentment comes “when we escape the servitude to things, when we find our wealth in the love and the fellowship of men, and when we realize that our most precious possession is our friendship with God, made possible through Jesus Christ” (Barclay, 131).

The word “contentment” (*autarkeias*) occurs in the NT only here and 2 Cor. 9:8.

6:7 - “and since we brought nothing into the world, surely we are not able to take anything out”

This verse underscores or illustrates why “contentment” is so important.

Since we brought nothing into this world and will not be able to take anything with us upon departure from it, why should we not prioritize the pursuit of the “great gain” – that of godliness with contentment? To spend our lives in amassing great material possessions is certainly a dead end street at the end of our life’s journey. “Our only object is [or should be] to have *an unembarrassed journey*, till we reach our [heavenly] country” (Bengel, 532). Wealth, possessions, and other material accumulations are “not essential to our well-being” (Gealy, 450).

Noyes (450) observes:

The fact is, however, that many a man is not successful in a worldly sense because of his loyalty to principles, and that many a man has made money by his disregard for ethical principles. There are three searching questions to be applied to all wealth: ‘How is it acquired?’ ‘How is it used?’ ‘To whom does the owner consider himself accountable in its use?’

6:8 - “and having food and clothing we shall be satisfied”

The word translated **clothing** [*skepasmata*] “includes shelter, too. Knowing the unimportance of wealth, the Christian is **content** with food and clothing in moderation” (Gealy, 451). This word occurs nowhere else in the NT.

The word “shall be satisfied” (*arkesthesometha*) is used by Paul only one other time in regard to the *sufficiency* of God’s grace (2 Cor. 12:9). [Its only other occurrences in the NT are: Mt. 25:9; Lk. 3:14; Jn. 6:7; 14:8; Heb. 13:5; 3 Jn. 10.]

Paul, of course, is echoing the explicit statements of Jesus in Mt. 6:25; 10:9-10.

6:9 - “and those wishing for themselves to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge men into ruin and destruction”

The word “wishing” (*boulomenoi*) is a present tense middle voice participle in which those unnamed ones are chronically engaged with insatiable desires for themselves to get rich. That is, “they make the acquisition of riches their aim. . . . to have more money than that which satisfies their accustomed needs . . . having a single eye to the accumulation of money by any means” (White, 143).

Paul names four features of their insatiable passionate pursuits which can only lead to fatal consequences: (1) “temptation” (*perismon*) refers to the inevitable “consequences of one’s money-grabbing spirit on others”



(White, 144); they are tempted “to neglect the highest interests of the soul and the duties due to God, and to use improper means to obtain wealth” (Harvey, 74); they are “opposed to food and to faith” (Bengel, 533); (2) “snare” (*pagida*) refers to being “opposed to clothing and to righteousness” (Bengel, 533); this encompasses “its disastrous effect on one’s own character” (White, 144); Thayer (472 says this refers to “a trap, noose; whatever brings peril, loss, destruction: of a sudden and unexpected deadly peril”; “therefore they do not find gain” (Bengel, 533); (3) “many foolish desires” (*epithumias pollas anoetous*) are “the passions naturally springing out of selfishness become regnant in them. They become envious, overreaching, avaricious, hard-hearted, unscrupulous as to truth and the rights of others. Foolish because unworthy of a reasonable and immortal being, and because, even when men thereby secure wealth, they do not obtain happiness” (Harvey, 74). (4) “harmful” (*blaberas*) because “they destroy all that is pure and noble in mankind, and insure at last the loss of the soul” (Ibid); this also includes a “harmful lack of community spirit” (BAG, 141); As Gould (616-617) so disturbingly observes: “It is surely true that nothing assails a man with greater violence than the desire for financial gain, once he has given place in his soul to this demon of greed. Men are lured further and further away from their principles of honesty and honor by the prospect of easy profits.”

These four features “plunge men into ruin and destruction.” The verb “which plunge” (*buthizousin*) means “sink, drag down, drown”; or in the words of Robertson (593), “drag to the bottom.” They are literally drowning in these desires. This word occurs in the NT only here and Lk. 5:7.

This dragging down to the bottom, drowning, or sinking leads to the end result of “ruin and destruction.” The word “ruin” (*olethron*) means “the consequences of the indulgence of the flesh, referring to physical ruin and possibly that of the whole being” (Vine, 306); “the loss of a life of blessedness after death, future misery” (Thayer, 443); “bodily destruction” (Knight, 256).

The word “destruction” (*apoleian*) is used “in the sense of ‘perdition’” (Harvey, 121); “misery” (Thayer, 71); “as opposed to great gain” (Bengel, 533); “spiritual destruction” (Knight, 256); “utter destruction” (BAG, 103).

- 6:10 - “for the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, which some having been in pursuit of it wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows”

The word “love of money” (*philarguria*) occurs here only in the NT. A similar word (*philarguros*) occurs in Lk. 16:14; 2 Tim. 3:2 for an

insatiable fondness for money, avaricious or greediness, greatly desiring money or property or wealth.

It is not true, of course, that wealth within itself is wrong or sinful. But when the desire for obtaining more and more is the motivating force in one's life, it may lead to "all sorts of evil" activities.

In fact, the word "root" (*hriza*) so indicates this potential. That is, the root of something is that part of something from which other things grow and develop; the base from which various sorts of offspring proceed. In this verse, of course, it refers to any sort of sinful crime which will occur for the sake of obtaining money. Instead of using money to procure food and clothing, its possession has become a god within itself.

Although this quote from Barclay (132-133) is lengthy, its importance relative to the specific dangers within the love of money will be readily recognized:

(i) The desire for money tends to be a thirst which is insatiable. . . . so far from quenching a man's thirst, it intensifies it. The more he gets, the more he wants.

(ii) The desire for wealth is founded on an illusion. It is founded on the desire for security; but wealth cannot buy security. It cannot buy health, nor real love; and it cannot preserve from sorrow and from death. The security which is founded on material things is foredoomed to failure.

(iii) The desire for money tends to make a man selfish. If he is driven by the desire for wealth, it is nothing to him that someone has to lose in order that he may gain. The desire for wealth fixes a man's thoughts upon himself, and others become merely means or obstacles in the path to his own enrichment. True, that *need* not happen; but in fact it often *does*.

(iv) Although the desire for wealth is based on the desire for security, it ends in nothing but anxiety. The more a man has to keep, the more he has to lose and, the tendency is for him to be haunted by the risk of loss.

(v) The love of money may easily lead a man into wrong ways of getting it, and therefore, in the end, into pain and remorse. That is true even physically. He may so drive his body in his passion to get, that he ruins his health. He may discover too late what damage his desire has done to others and be saddled with remorse.

In fact, this reckless, insatiable, “continual pursuit” (*oregomenoi* – present tense, middle voice participle indicating ceaseless striving for, reaching for) of more and more money for themselves has caused some to wander away from the faith or “trust in God and Christ as the central desire and love of their life” (Knight, 258).

The word “pierced themselves” (*heautous periepeiran*) means to “pierce through (as with a spike).”

The word “sorrows” (*odunais*) indicates “mental distress or grief” (Knight, 258). As Hauck (115) points out, it encompasses “the severe and piercing self-accusations and pangs of conscience which will smite those who have defected out of love of money.”

Paul adds the word “many” (*pollais*) to these “sorrows” as if to intentional match the “many” (*pollas*) sinful desires in v. 9.

## VI POWERFUL CONTRASTS (6:11-19)

6:11 - “But you, O man of God, must continually flee from these things; and must constantly pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness”

Although Paul will resume his remarks about the rich in vs. 17-19, he now directs four passionate pleadings, instructions, and imperatives to Timothy in verses 11-12, with verses 13-16 providing the concrete foundation upon which these imperatives are lodged.

The word “but” (*de*) indicates a powerful contrast to the dangers of the love of money in 6:5b-10.

The expression, “O man of God,” occurs but one other time in the NT: 2 Tim. 3:17. It serves to arrest Timothy’s attention in regard to his other-worldly mindset and to stimulate and motivate him as to the proper pathway he must diligently and devotedly pursue. This term alerts him to remember that he was “a man belonging to the spiritual order of things with which that which is merely temporal, transitory and perishing can have no permanent relationship” (White, 144). This term occurs some “78 times in the OT to depict that a man of God is not his own; he is a consecrated person, one who has parted with all his rights to surrender his life wholly for God’s purposes” (*The Jerusalem Post*, September 3, 2011).

The linking of this term, therefore, to Timothy indicates Paul’s overwhelming conviction that he was, indeed, a special spokesman for God in his own time and setting. This, in addition to his being an evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5) and an apostle (1 Thes. 2:6), is a powerful contrast to the false teachers and their longings for special recognition and treatment.

The four imperatives are not suggestions or recommendations but commands to be obeyed: (1) “you must continually flee from these things” – The word “flee” (*pheuge*) means to “run away, escape; shun; avoid, turn from.” As “a

mediating messenger of God to men, [he must be] removed from earthly things” (Bengel, 533). The word “these things” (*tauta*) includes 6:5b-10, and anything else of worldly endeavors which would pry him or cause him to stray from his mission. (2) “you must constantly pursue” (*dioke*) six features of the faith:

- (a) “righteousness” (*dikaiosunen*) – This is “*moral rectitude* according to God’s law” (Vincent, 278). It denotes “integrity or right behavior” (Gealy, 452). This is the theme of Romans and occurs 66 times in that letter in its various cognates or grammatical forms. You may consult my commentary on Romans in this regard: [archive.org/details/@mandm313](http://archive.org/details/@mandm313).
- (b) “godliness” (*eusebeian*) – This word occurred earlier in this letter: 2:2; 3:16; 4:7, 8; 6:3, 5, 6 which see for comments. Taken together with the previous word, these two terms “have the widest relations, pointing to general conformity to God’s law and practical piety” (White, 145).
- (c) “faith” (*pistin*) – This word denotes commitment to God, regardless of the temptations to worldly attractions, such as the love of money and evils associated with it as noted above. It is the front doorway of entrance into the Christian faith, as well as continuous access to the pulsating power of God to remain in that commitment throughout one’s Christian pilgrimage. It speaks of “loyalty to received teaching” (Gealy, 452).
- (d) “love” (*agape*) – This is the heart and core of God’s Being, as well as the primary refrain of the Christian’s character and conduct throughout earth’s little while. It is the apex of affirmations within and in response to the Word of God; the top rung in the ladder of discipleship; the primary trait by which one is known as a child of God; the exclusive mark by which others may be attracted to and ultimately brought together to share in life with God.
- (e) “endurance” (*hupomone*) – This “signifies steadfast endurance under trials” (Harvey, 75) which daily seek to draw people away from God because of the difficulties, struggles, allurements, and worldly attractions about which this worldly system operates (1 Jn. 2:16-17). It embraces “the *brave* patience with which the Christian contends against the various hindrances, persecutions, and temptations which befall him in his conflict with the inward and outward world” (Trench/Ellicott, 197).
- (f) “gentleness” (*praupathian*) – This word occurs here only in the NT and denotes “humility,” and “*tenderness of feeling*” (Harvey, 75). Vine (738) calls it “a meek disposition.” Lenski (714) indicates it means “making and enforcing no high claims, the very opposite of what pagan and worldly morality admires,”

6:12 - “you must keep on fighting the good fight of faith, you must keep on taking hold of the eternal life, to which you have been called and having confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses”

(3) “you must keep on fighting” (*agonizou*) – Even the untrained eye can see the English word “agony” in this Greek word. It indicates strenuous effort

and intense activity on the battlefield of spiritual warfare. This is another present tense verb calling for continual pursuit without vacation or time for relaxation or freedom from tension. There must be no phlegmatism or complacency in this contest.

This fight is “the good fight of faith.” Paul here “borrows the language of a wrestling match” (Noyes, 453). Lenski (714-715) comments:

Keep on straining every muscle and nerve in the noble straining for the faith. Fight faith’s fight! i.e., the fight faith always has to fight. Contend the noble contest for the substance of the Christian faith! Hold the banner of the faith high! Carry it to victory! To give one’s life for that is noble. To wander away from The Faith (v. 10), to be caught in the devil’s snare, pierced with a thousand pains caused by our own folly – how ignoble, what shame.

(4) “you must keep on taking hold” (*epilabou*) is the fourth imperative and “implies contending for the victor’s prize” (Noyes, 453). To keep on taking hold implies “something that is near at hand” (Bengel, 533). It is not out of reach or beyond one’s grasp. That which Timothy is commanded to take hold of is “eternal life. He has [already] received this from God and is to appropriate it now” (Liefeld, 210). In other words, this is not something to be done once and then taken for granted. The present tense imperative indicates this personal appropriation is to be done continually or continuously. Again, no room for time-outs, vacations, lulls, or complacency is available for consideration.

This can actually be done because “you have already been called to do so” (*eklethes* – an aorist tense verb indicating that God has already made this possible to do). There is no room for other options to be considered. God commands His children to do what He has enabled them to do.

This can actually be done because “you have already confessed the good confession” (*homologesas ten kalen homologian* – an aorist tense verb indicating that you have already set yourself up to stay the course. This past confession makes continued confession possible. Again, no room for time-outs, vacations, lulls, or complacency is available for consideration.

This concrete, specific time of confession was his moment of conversion, perhaps even at his “baptism or to some other experience early on in his Christian life” (Liefeld, 211). Cp. Hervey (122) for the time of “his baptism.” Whatever the exact or precise meaning is, “confession is a basic doctrine in the Lord’s teaching (Mt. 10:32)” (Wycliffe, 862) and Paul’s (Rom. 10:9)

The concluding phrase “in the presence of many witnesses” surely refers to some strategic event or moment in his life and “almost certainly refers to more than just a few elders laying hands on him” (Liefeld, 211) for or-

dination.

- 6:13 - "I am giving instructions to you in the presence of God Who gives life to all things and of Christ Jesus Who bore testimony to the good confession before Pontus Pilate"

Paul's instructions to Timothy are here represented as being witnessed by the presence of God and Jesus Christ Himself. He is the One Who gives "eternal life" (v. 12) to all who exercise faith in Jesus Christ.

By referring to Jesus' testimony of confessing the truth borne Pontus Pilate, His "confession [thereby] animates all confessions" of men (Bengel, 534). As Bengel further adds, "it was for the Lord *to witness a confession*, for Timothy *to confess a confession*" (Ibid). As Harvey (76) points out, "The design [of this reference] is to inspire Timothy with boldness in his great office as an ambassador for Christ, by presenting at once the sure basis of the gospel in Christ's solemn attestation of its truth, and the sublime example of its confession by Christ, even when in peril of death."

The confession is "good" in the sense that it was a confirmation of truth, regardless of if and how it was received by Pilate. His testimony to the truth has stood the test of time.

- 6:14 - "to keep the commandment stainless, irreproachable until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"

Paul continues as to why he was giving these instructions to Timothy: to keep, not a specific command, but the whole package of whatever commandment was given by God at any particular time: repent, exercise faith, follow in obedience, etc. The orientation is "that Timothy is to guard, protect, preserve all the teaching enjoined upon him so that it will ever remain as spotless and as faultless as when he received it" (Lenski, 721).

Indeed, the word "keep" (*teresai*) means "to observe, obey, pay attention to, keep under guard, keep in custody, maintain, keep firm." To say safeguard any commandment of God is to obey it, and in order to obey it, it must be guarded.

The word "stainless" (*aspilon*) means "pure, without defect" in a "moral sense" (BAG, 116).

The word "irreproachable" (*anepilempton*) means "conduct" (BAG, 64) that is "above reproach."

Together, these two words indicate that "Timothy is enjoined so to conduct himself in his sacred office that, before God and man, the office shall appear in its true moral purity and lustre, unmarred by defects which shall obscure its dignity and worth, and thus weaken its power" (Harvey, 76).

This thought of the future coming of Jesus was "always prominent in the mind of Paul (1 Cor. i. 7, 8; iv. 5; xv. 23; Col. iii. 4; 1 Thess. iii. 13; iv. 15;

2 Thess.1:9, etc.), seems to have acquired fresh intensity amidst the troubles and dangers of the closing years of his life, both as an object of hope and as a motive of action (2 Tim. i. 10; ii. 12; iv. 1, 8; Titus ii. 13)” (Hervey, 122). Regardless of Paul’s perspective on Timothy, at the return of Christ, he will be judged by the Lord Himself concerning his faithfulness – a sober and solemn judgment for all.

- 6:15 - “which He shall bring about at [the] proper time – the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords”

This judgment will be executed by “the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.”

The word “blessed” indicates “His exhaustless powers and perfections” (Ellicott, 98).

The words “only Sovereign” (*monos dunastes*) refer to His exclusive “absolute dominion” (Ellicott, 98-99) as “ruler” (BAG, 207).

The words “King of kings and Lord of lords” denote that He “is governor of all earthly princes” (Hinson, 336). “As King of all others who act as kings and as Lord of all others who act as lords this only Potentate is infinitely supreme” (Lenski, 725). It is utterly impossible to conceive of one who is greater than, or in any sense, equal to, or competitive with Him.

- 6:16 - “Who alone possesses immortality, lives in unapproachable light, Whom no man has seen or has been able to see; to Whom [is] honor and eternal powerful dominion, Amen.”

The word “immortality” means “He in whom immortality essentially exists” (Ellicott, 99). Human beings “receive their immortality from him” (Hinson, 336).

The words “lives in unapproachable light” indicates “God as dwelling, as it were, in an atmosphere of light, surrounded by glories which no created nature may ever *approach*, no mortal eye may ever *contemplate*” (Ellicott, 99).

The words “to Whom [is] honor and eternal powerful dominion” is an exclamation of doxological praise. The word “honor” (*time*) embraces all He is due in terms of adoration, esteem, reverential awe, and worship.

The words “eternal powerful dominion” (*kratos aionion*) speak of the exercise of His strength, might, and majesty as He rules from above.

Together, these two terms are ascriptions “of honor and eternal omnipotent sway” (Wycliffe, 863). Paul’s initial doxology in 1:17 was “honor and glory.” This concluding doxology is one of “honor and power.” Within the parameters of these two almost bookend support phrases, Paul offers his praises to God. Everything written between them is a manifestation of them.

The word “amen” (*amen*) seals the deal, meaning “truly, verily, say it again,

let it be so.”

- 6:17 - “You must keep on instructing those who are rich in this present world to not be conceited or to permanently place confidence in the uncertainty of riches but rather upon God Who richly supplies us all things to enjoy”

Here Paul resumes his thoughts from v. 10 in regard to riches from a more positive or constructive perspective. After all, some people are rich or wealthy and that, in itself, need not be constructed or viewed in a negative manner. Although the temptation is there to become “conceited” about a surplus of money or property, that certainly is not the case with all wealthy people. Those for whom this potential “conceit” may occur clearly need the instruction Paul is here giving “not to be high-minded” (Robertson, 595) about it. After all, to place one’s complete confidence in riches or wealth is a slippery slide due to the uncertainty of how long such riches or wealth will be maintained and other risks which accompany such a state.

So, in contrast to earthly riches or wealth, the pathway to godly riches or wealth resides in God Himself “Who richly supplies us all things to enjoy.” God “alone is stable” (Robertson, 595) and He possesses riches or wealth which the world cannot surpass or diminish. And while *greediness* may guide both the accumulation, acquisition, and expenditure of riches in the world, God’s riches are lavishly bestowed on others from His *generosity*. God’s riches are for the expressed purpose “to enjoy” (*apolausis* – which occurs only one other time in the NT: Heb. 11:25) both now and forever. Paul is here setting forth a contrast “between being highminded on account of wealth – cherishing and worshipping it – and rightly enjoying it. The true character of such enjoyment is shown in the next verse” (Vincent, 282).

- 6:18 - “to continue doing good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, ready to share”

The contrast just mentioned is now seen in the consistent and continuous pattern “to continue doing good” (*agatheorein* – the only other occurrence of this word in the NT is Acts 14:17), or as the New English Bible translates: always “ready to give away and to share” to those in need. Indeed, the very word “to be generous” (*eumetadotous* – BAG, 323) means “ready to distribute” (Vincent, 282); “*ready or free to impart; liberal*” (BAG, 260).

The word “ready to share” (*koinonikous* – occurring here only in the NT) also means to be “liberal” and implies “a personal share in the pleasure imparted by the gift” (Vincent, 282). As Thayer (352) notes: “*inclined to make others sharers in one’s possessions, inclined to impart, free in giving.*” Willingness is a key trait of this readiness.

- 6:19 - “acquiring as a treasure for themselves a good foundation for the future,



in order that they may take hold of the real life”

The word “acquiring as a treasure” (*apothēsaurizontas* – occurring here only in the NT) is a present tense participle indicating what is happening simultaneously with the activities mentioned in vs.17-18. In other words, as they engage in those noted activities or exercises, they are accumulating for themselves riches or wealth which is out of this world. After all, these spiritual riches which are being accumulated while engaged in active service and ministry on this earth “are merely the shadow of the eternal reality to come” (Robertson, 596). As J. B. Phillips translates, “Their security should be invested in the life to come, so that they may be sure of holding a share in the life which is permanent.” This “good foundation” (*themelion kalon*) is “good” because it is not “shaky or made of sand” which will not stand the tests and turmoils of time’s terrain. This “good foundation” is God’s Word, Christ Jesus Himself, and the pattern of good works in vs. 17-18. This word “foundation” occurs elsewhere in the NT: Lk. 6:48; 1 Cor. 3:10, 11; Eph. 2:20; 2 Tim. 2:19. In the words of the hymn, “How Firm a Foundation”:

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word.  
What more can He say than to you He hath said,  
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled.

‘Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed,  
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid.  
I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,  
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand’.

‘When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,  
My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;  
The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design  
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine’.

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose  
‘I will not, I will not desert to its foes’;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
‘I’ll never, no, never, no, never forsake’.

Could these itemized, documented *powerful contrasts* be anymore clearer and convincing than they are? Never, no, never!

## VII POINTED CONCLUSION (6:20-21)

6:20 - “O Timothy, you must guard what is entrusted to your care by avoiding

godless, foolish talk and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge”

The words “O Timothy” carry with them a tenderness and affection which Paul had for his son (cp. 1:18).

The final imperative to Timothy in this letter is “you must guard” (*phulaxon*), a term Paul used early in 5:1 and elsewhere in: Rom. 2:26; Gal. 6:13; 2 Thes. 3:3; 2 Tim. 1:12, 14; 4:15. This carries with it a military-like guarding or protecting something which is treasured, and needs preserving and defending (BAG, 876). It also implies the idea of making a “deposit” (Robertson, 596). The object of such guarding or protecting may be his “gift” (4:14) or “sound teaching” (1:10).

The present tense middle participle “by avoiding” (*ektrepomenos* – used earlier in 1:6; 5:15) tells how this guarding and protecting is to be carried out: (1) “godless, foolish talk” (*bebelous kenophonias*) “implies blasphemous desecration of holy things, which consist of high-sounding, empty words and speculations used for purposes of ostentation” (Wycliffe, 864); (2) “contradictions” (*antitheseis* – only here in the NT) are “the arguments and teachings of those who opposed the true Christian doctrine as intrusted to Timothy” (Vincent, 283); “*opposition, objection*” (BAG, 73); “opposed to true Christian doctrine” (Thayer, 50).

Both these terms are now categorized as “falsely called knowledge” (*pseudonumou enoseos* – here only in the NT) which Paul so labeled “to distinguish solid learning and fact from speculations without evidence, mere myth and fancy” (Wycliffe, 864). Gould (622) quotes Scott in this regard: “here, perhaps, we have the clearest indication given us in the Epistles that the false teaching was of a gnostic type. Its exponents laid claim to a ‘gnosis’ or higher knowledge, although, in the writer’s [Paul] view, they were misusing a great word.”

6:21 - “which some, while professing have lost the way in regard to the faith. The grace [of God be] with you.”

The danger of adhering to and “professing” (*epaggello* - cp. 2:10) these false teachers/teachings is that “they have lost the way” (*astocheo* – cp. 1:6; the only other occurrence of this word in the NT: 2 Tim. 2:18) – they have wandered away and gone astray from the “sound teaching” of the Christian faith. By turning away from the truth of the Christian gospel they have fallen into the disastrous pit of false teachings which pervert and poison their minds and subsequently their behaviors.

The “grace” which makes these frowning and fickle followers of false teaching such despicable examples not worthy to be followed is the same “grace” with which Paul opened this letter (1:2), which he accented again in 1:12, 14, and with which he now closes.

This is, indeed, a pointed conclusion!

## II Timothy

Scripture in a Structural Format

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- IX EULOGY (4:22)

## II Timothy

### A Commentary

#### I EXCLAMATION (1:1-2)

##### A. Significant Phrases (1:1)

- 1:1 - “Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God according to the promise of life which [is] in Christ Jesus”

In typical fashion, this letter begins with the name of the one sending it and four significant phrases which were worthy of exclamation. Paul designates himself as (1) “an apostle” (*apostolos* – *apo* (“from”) and *stolos* (“sent”)), not by his own choosing or initiative as a volunteer but sent on a mission due to his belonging to and message about (2) “Christ Jesus.” In other words, he was specifically appointed to a special mission in connection with or about “Christ Jesus.” This was by means of (3) “the will of God” (cp. Acts 22:14-15). This was no man-made mission. He was, there-fore, qualified to carry out this mission with divine authority. This mission was in accordance with, in alignment with, or with a view to fulfilling or carrying out some rather astounding news about (4) “the promise of life in Christ Jesus.” This “promise” (*epaggelian*) was from the God Who cannot lie (Titus 1:2) and was, therefore, anchored with security, certainty, and dependability. This promise from God was one “of life” and was offered to those who were “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1). Since this “life” is said to be “in Christ Jesus,” or in connection with Him, it cannot result from human works. It is “not something evolved from within us by personal strivings, but of grace, as something freely flowing from him to us, by virtue of his spontaneous, unmerited mercy” (Harvey, 83). It is worthy of exclamation!

##### B. Sonship (1:2a)

- 1:2a - “to Timothy, beloved child”

Paul identifies his recipient, Timothy (*Timotheo* – *Timo* [“honor of”] and *theo* [“god”]) from a slightly different perspective than in 1 Timothy. There he was designated “genuine child.” Here Paul calls him “beloved child” (*agapeto tekno*). The term “beloved” denotes “the strongest declaration of love” (Bengel, 539) by God and by Paul. As Paul was anticipating his own martyrdom (4:6-8), “love would naturally be the dominant feeling at such a moment” (Harvey, 83).

### C. Spiritual Tokens (1:2b)

1:2b - “ grace, mercy, peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord”

Instead of the usual “grace and peace” in Paul’s writings, he here interjects the word “mercy” – exclusively here, 1 Tim. 1:2, Tit. 1:4; cp. 3:5. [Those with textual criticism insights may well consider the words of Bruce Metzger about the insertion of the word “mercy”:

The typically Pauline epistolary salutation, *charis kai eirene*, is strongly supported by good representatives of both the Alexandrian and Western types of text. The insertion of *heleos* seems to be an emendation prompted by the analogy of the threefold salutation in 1 Tm. 1.2 and 2 Tm. 1.2.

Regardless of the conclusion one may draw about this matter, the cited spiritual tokens – whether triad or duo – are of divine origin which are designed for human benefits. Cp. 1 Tim. 1:2 for comments in this regard.

## II ENCOURAGEMENT (1:3-2:26)

### A. Spiritual Heritage (1:3-7)

1:3 - “I constantly offer gratitude to the God Whom I continually yield worshipful service with a clear conscience, from my forefathers, when I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day”

Paul lived with a positively chronic pattern of giving thanks to God for the inheritance “of his religious consciousness from his forefathers” (White, 153) and the worshipful service he continually offers to God. Paul’s loyalty to God and His good news is seen in his spiritual heritage. Here, Paul is not viewing his past experiences with God and his present experiences with God as antithetical or diametrically opposed to each other. He has not deserted the Jewish religion as if he had turned away from the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to some other God/god. Again, the words “clear conscience” (*kathara suneidesei*) means that Paul is not looking at his past life, in concert with his ancestors, from a bad or negative standpoint, as he did in 1 Tim. 1:13. There, he was specifically focused on his sincere opposition to those he perceived to be in opposition to God. But even then, he acted with “a clear conscience,” as did his ancestors; that is, “the spiritual sphere in which the *latreia* was offered” (Ellicott, 110).

The words “from my forefathers” (*apo progenon*) means “with the feel-

ings and principles inherited from them” (Ibid).

So, when Jesus revealed to him the actual corrupt nature of his previous activities, he, nevertheless, recognized “that there was a certain continuity between Judaism and Christianity in his life. While recognizing the weaknesses which were inherent in Judaism apart from its fulfillment in Christ, he [now] never fails to acknowledge the abiding values of his heritage” (Gould, 626).

Paul now continues with his offering of gratitude to God in relation to his night and day remembrances of Timothy in his prayers. The words “night and day” reveal “the intensity of Paul’s longings” (Hinson, 339) in his prayers.

- 1:4 - “earnestly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, in order that I may be filled with joy”

The nature of his prayers is now itemized in vs. 14-15: **(1)** “earnestly desiring to see you” reveal the passionate nature of Paul’s longings to see Timothy again; **(2)** “being mindful of your tears” reveal that “Paul’s longing was made keener by his recollection of the tears Timothy had shed at their last parting” (White, 153). These tears were most appropriate. They indicated “his pious tenderness of feeling. Tears, the flower of the heart, indicate either the greatest hypocrisy or the utmost sincerity” (Bengel, 539). The latter, of course, was the case with Timothy over his departure from Paul. **(3)** “in order that I may be filled with joy” express Paul’s purpose: “the joy of renewed contact with a beloved colleague” (Knight, 368).

- 1:5 - “having received a reminder of your genuine faith which first existed in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, and now assuredly in you also”

**(5)** “having received a reminder of your genuine faith” – This “reminder” (*hupomnesin* – only here and 1 Pt. 1:13; “a reminder by another” [Robertson, 611]; the verb form of this word [*hupomimneske*] is in 2:14). This “genuine” nature of Timothy’s faith means it was “sincere, without hypocrisy.”

“In the midst of persecution and suffering, where fidelity is so very important (cf. 1:8ff.), Paul is thankful to God that he can remember Timothy as one in whom (*en soi*) there was a faith that neither wavered nor was double-minded, a genuine trust in God” (Knight, 369).

In addition to mentioning his own spiritual heritage, Paul now mentions the spiritual heritage of Timothy. Both his grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice, were apparently Jews, and were people of faith. So, by mentioning Timothy’s grandmother and mother, he is paralleling Timo-

thy's heritage with that of his own. Paul's paralleling is a way of reminding himself and Timothy of the constant need for encouragement in the spiritual warfare.

- 1:6 - "and for this reason I am reminding you to rekindle the gift of God which came upon you when I laid my hands upon you"

In Paul's first letter to Timothy (4:14), Paul urged him to "not neglect" his spiritual gift. Now, as an additional reason for Paul's paralleling his spiritual heritage with Timothy is to motivate him "to rekindle" (*anazopurein*) or "stir up, to stir into flame; even "fan into flame" (Gealy, 463) his spiritual gift.

Noyes (463-464) frames it this way:

The reference is to the gift of the Spirit at ordination, and suggests that even after a man has received the quickening of the Spirit, he himself has a responsibility for keeping the flame burning. The exhortation is applicable to a wider circle than the ordained ministry. Every Christian knows the temptation to discouragement over the progress of the Christian cause and over his own progress, to lethargy as Christian service becomes an old story rather than a novelty, and to a shrinking from the sacrifices involved in a thoroughgoing Christian loyalty. The loyalty and devotion which are at the heart of Christian faith need to be constantly rekindled through prayer, corporate worship, and unceasing Christian service. The Christian cause in every generation is crippled and handicapped by the dormant gifts of its adherents.

While others may or may not have been involved in the ordination of Timothy, Paul is here reminding Timothy that his 'father in the faith' was there and this fresh personal reminder is to play a prominent role in fanning the flame of Timothy's zeal and earnestness in the service to which he was called and gifted..

As White (154) notes, "we are most fruitfully stimulated to noble action, not when we think other people think well of us, but when their good opinion makes us recognize the gifts to us of God's grace."

- 1:7 - "For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice or timidity but of power and of love and of a sensible mind"

In addition to his former "tears," Timothy may have also been experiencing some "fears." In light of the words of Jesus that His followers would

likewise face persecutions as He Himself did; in light of his remembrances of all the troubles he either saw or had heard about concerning Paul; in light of possible governmental opposition to the followers of Jesus, Timothy himself may very well have been undergoing some degree of fearful opposition.

As Noyes (464-465) reminds us, “fear is for many people one of the central problems of life – fear of their own inadequacy, fear of the unfavorable opinion of other people, fear of disease, fear of financial insecurity, fear of the unknown. Such fears sap strength, paralyze initiative, and poison the atmosphere.”

Paul, therefore, humbly reminds Timothy that such fears do not come from God. As the alternative to fear, Paul characterizes God’s provisions for ministry under three terms: (1) “power” (*dunameos*) is the ability to do what needs to be done: “to overcome all obstacles and to face all dangers” (Vincent, 290); (2) “love” (*agape*) is “an inner inclination to persons or things, and stands opposed to *hate*. It expresses a deep, quiet, appropriating, natural love, as distinguished from that which is called out by circumstances. It has a distinct moral significance, and is not applied to base inclinations opposed to a genuine manly nature. It is the word for love to parents, wife, children, king or country, as one’s own. It is love out of an intelligent estimate of the object of love. It is not passionate and sensual. It is less *sentiment* than *consideration*. It is judicial rather than affectionate. Love is the fruit of the Spirit which dominates all the others” (Vincent, 166-168). (3) “a sensible mind” (*sophronismou*) – found only here in the NT - refers to “*good judgment, moderation, self-control*” (BAG, 810); “a reasoned, disciplined, well-ordered life” (Gealy, 465); “it is properly the condition of an entire command over the passions and desires, so that they receive no further allowance than that which the law and right reason admit and approve” (Trench, 70); “discipline” (Vine, 318); “correction, or sound instruction” (Hervey, 2).

## B. Salvation (1:8-10)

1:8 - “Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, neither of me His prisoner, but participate with me in the sufferings or hardships for the good news in accordance with the power of God”

If Timothy’s temperament was that of a natural melancholy vs. sanguine or choleric, he may have been more inclined toward shyness and/or easy discouragement; plus, if he had any mixture of faintheartedness or double-mindedness, this would also impact his timidity and loyalty to Christ and Paul in the face of opposition and difficulties.

The fear that a bold and public testimony to the Lord might lead to a



loss of his life could also have impacted Timothy. If Timothy had already been caught or trapped in any of the above scenarios, however, Paul would have used the present tense imperative with the negative to forbid the continuance of an action that was already occurring or in active motion.

However, the words “do not be ashamed” (*me epaischunthes*) indicate otherwise. In fact, Paul uses “the aorist subjunctive with the negative which forbids the doing of an act not yet begun” (Wuest, 119).

Paul, therefore, pleads with Timothy to not begin to succumb to such temptations. Rather, be courageous and fearless in bearing witness to Christ.

Neither should he let Paul’s imprisonment contribute to any form of shame or embarrassment.

Rather, Paul’s follow-up use of the imperative mood means that no other option is viable for Timothy: “participate with me in the sufferings or hardships for the good news in accordance with the power of God.”

Indeed, the word “participate with me in the sufferings” (*sugkakopathe-son*) means “to take one’s share of ill-treatment” (Guthrie, 128).

It is the normal pathway for pilgrims through this weary land. “The sufferings are those of a natural accompaniment of the preaching of the gospel” (Wuest, 120).

The ability by which Timothy is to stand, withstand, and remain faithful in and through all the sufferings lies not in his personality or temperament style but in the powerful ability which God provides. In the words of the New English Bible: “in the strength that comes from God.”

- 1:9 - “since He saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us through union with Christ Jesus before times eternal”

The strength that comes from God is manifested in His redemptive action of salvation. Reference here, of course, is to the initial moment of salvation: regeneration or new birth. Salvation is a process which begins with regeneration but is followed by sanctification or the outworking and unfolding of salvation in terms of service and ministry.

The culmination of salvation is glorification when those who have been through the two prior components of salvation arrive in heaven. A corollary component of being saved is to be “called with a holy calling” (*kalesantos klesei hagia*). This is consecration to the invitation. As Gould (629-630) points out:

This means more than a holiness that exists in name only or is merely imputed to the believer by the supreme holiness of God; it means that the believer is

loosed from his sins and delivered from their guilt and power. God's call is to an experience and life that involve a complete consecration on the believer's part and a complete inner cleansing on God's part.

This regeneration and consecration are not the result of worthy works on the part of humans. Rather, the initiative in both regards belongs to God. It is He alone Who brings life to those who were dead in trespasses and sins and does so in accordance with His very purpose and grace.

In other words, God "was self-moved, impelled by motives, not from without, but from within, himself. His design of mercy was called forth by no desert, no worthiness in us" (Harvey, 88). In order to further magnify the majesty of God, Paul adds that "the grace in which the divine purpose for man expresses itself was given to mankind before times eternal" (White, 157).

Both the KJV and Beck translate *pro chronon aionion* "before the world began." That is, before time itself began. Both Paul in 1 Cor. 2:7, and Peter in 1 Pt. 1:20 place "the beginnings of salvation in God's purpose before the time of the world and Christ's participation in the saving counsels of God prior to time [which stress] Christ's preexistence" (Vincent, 291). That is the idea here.

1:10 - "but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus Who abolished death, after having brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"

But that which was concealed in the counsels of God in a timeless present has now been revealed in the documented history of time when God became flesh in Jesus of Nazareth. He appeared as "Saviour." See my article "Saviour: God's Graceful Gesture" on my website: [archive.org/details/@mandm313](http://archive.org/details/@mandm313).

To say that His appearance "abolished death" (*katargesantos men ton thanaton*) means that death's fearful trap has been extinguished or obliterated, rendered ineffective, nullified, canceled; destroyed, done away with, exhausted." The precise manner in which this occurred was through His historical appearing in human life, physical death and resurrection, exaltation to the right hand of the Majesty on High, and His continual ministry of intercession in heaven for His own.

By this complete package, death was destroyed – not just death, but the entire components of His "appearing." By this full-gospel package, Jesus "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

That is, by destroying death, He made new "life and immortality" available in this world for appropriation. Indeed, "Christ has conquered

man's most feared enemy and laid a foundation for true life" (Hinson, 341).

As Alford (372-373) observes: "death has lost its sting and is henceforth of no more account: consequently the mere act of natural death is evermore treated by the Lord Himself and his Apostles as of no account."

In the words of Trentham (96-97):

The purpose of Christ's coming was to conquer man's last enemy, death, the king of terrors, and to illumine the whole meaning and reach of life by emphasizing its transcendency over time. Christ entered into the arena of death and vanquished the dark tyrant and united all who trust in his triumph over death. . . . The Saviour is the giver of new life which comes through the new birth and which does not have death but life eternal as its goal.

C. Suffering Spokesman (1:11-12)

1:11 - "for which I myself have been appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher"

The words "for which" (*eis ho*) mean the gospel he has just mentioned in v. 10.

The word "appointed" (*etethen*) means "to be destined, assigned, made something."

In 1 Timothy 2:7, these same three terms occur and in the same order, and describe various aspects of his ministry: (1) "preacher" (*kerux*) is one of the ways by which he puts forward the significance of the gospel; (2) "apostle" (*apostolos*) speaks of his earlier commission; (3) "teacher" (*didaskolos*) is one who explains more fully the contents of the gospel. Noyes (402) suggests the following five marks of a good teacher:

- (a) He must be a person of Christian faith and character;
- (b) he must care about other people, young and old, and must be eager to share Christian faith and knowledge;
- (c) he must be willing to learn the art of teaching, one of the most difficult of all the arts;
- (d) he must have courage, patience, and love;
- (e) he must be ready to give his best and leave the results with God.

1:12 - "for which reason I am also suffering these things; but I am not ashamed for I know Whom I am anchored in faith and stand convinced that He is

able to guard my deposit in Him until that day”

The words “for which reason” (*di’ hen aitian*) means because of his threefold appointment.

The word *tauta* (“these things”) refers to his bonds, imprisonment, and sufferings in connection with the gospel.

Paul has just appealed to Timothy (v. 8) to not be ashamed of the gospel and its associated sufferings, and now he declares that he himself is not ashamed. This boldness is anchored in a person. His faith or belief is in the perfect tense and denotes the One “in whom I have put my trust and still do put it”; “to whom I have reposed my faith and trust” (Ellicott, 117). This perfect tense “indicates action begun, even completed, in the past and continued in the present; it is repeated, persistent, and therefore tested belief or trust.

The verb “stand convinced” is also in the perfect tense and denotes a state or condition of certainty, confidence, and being absolutely sure.

There are no crossed-fingers or the potential for failure or disappointment.

To say that God “is able” means His ability “to guard my deposit in Him until that day” is sufficient and sustainable. The verb “to guard” (*phulaxai*) means “to protect, defend, keep safe” “against robbery or any loss” (Robertson, 614). The words “my deposit” (*ten paratheken mou*) mean “the deposit which is absolutely mine” (Ellicott, 118), and “in the bank of heaven [into] which no burglar can break” (Robertson, 614).

The words “that day” (*ekeinen ten hemeran*) mean “the day of final reckoning” (Ibid.); “the day of judgment and award (1 Cor. 3:13)” (White, 158).

#### D. Sound Teaching (1:13-14)

1:13 - “you must continue holding to the model of well-grounded words which you heard from me in faith and love in Christ Jesus”

The present tense imperative verb “you must continue holding” (*echo*) is a clarion call for urgent action of faith, despite the dire, difficult, and dreadful teachings which seek to bring havoc on the gospel. Thus, the object of this “holding” is “the model of well-grounded words which you heard from me in faith and love in Christ Jesus.”

The word “model” (*hupotuposin*) refers to the “example, pattern” set forth in the “well-grounded words” (*hugiainonton logon*) of the pure gospel which they had heard from Paul. Paul does not mean that Timothy is to use his manuscript from which to preach and teach. He is, however, referring to his “outline sketch or groundplan in forming the basis of a fuller exposition” (Kelly, 166). “It was not Timothy’s responsibility to ‘parrot’ the message of his apostolic mentor, but to speak God’s word in

full freedom while maintaining a concern that the authentic emphasis of the Christian message should undergo no change” (Gould, 632-633). The word “well-grounded” means that which is the “sound, correct teachings and teachers of the Christian faith” like they heard from Paul. The essence of what they heard from him was centered and grounded “in faith and love in Christ Jesus.” Thus, the object of their “holding to” was “a twofold loyalty – loyalty to the creed [faith] and loyalty to Christlike love. Without both loyalties, life goes astray” (Noyes, 472-473).

Barclay (154) elaborates on both these words:

Faith here has two ideas at its heart. (a) It has the idea of *fidelity*. The Christian leader must be for ever true and loyal to Jesus Christ. He must never be ashamed to show whose he is and whom he serves. Fidelity is the oldest and the most essential virtue in the world. (b) But faith also has in it the idea of *hope*. The Christian must never lose his confidence in God; he must never despair. There must be no pessimism, either for himself or for the world, in the heart of the Christian. He must never slacken in *love*. To love men is to see them as God sees them. It is to refuse ever to do anything but seek their highest good. It is to meet bitterness with forgiveness; it is to meet hatred with love; it is to meet indifference with a flaming passion which cannot be quenched. Christian love insistently seeks to love men as God loves them and as he first loved us.

1:14 - “you must guard this proper deposit which lives in you through the Holy Spirit”

Paul again uses the imperative “guard” (cp. v. 12) to indicate to “preserve from distortion and corruption at the hands of the sectaries” [members of a religious sect] (Kelly, 167).

He uses the term “deposit” again (cp. v. 12) to note the value and truthfulness of what God has entrusted into his care.

Again and indeed, “this guarding is not to be done in Timothy’s own strength” (Knight, 382) but in concert and cooperation with the Holy Spirit. It is that “final perseverance that can only be attained through the Holy Spirit” (White, 158).

It is something of this nature about which Paul is writing in Philippians 2:12-13.

E. Support (1:15-18)

- 1:15 - “You know this, that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes”

The name “Asia” does not refer to the present continent of Asia but to the Roman province in the western part of Asia Minor. There is no solid information as to the identity of the “all” who deserted Paul. Only two, in fact, are named – Phygelus and Hermogenes – and nothing else is known of them besides “this shameful item” (Robertson, 614).

- 1:16 - “May the Lord grant mercy to the family of Onesiphorus for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains”

One person by the name of Onesiphorus, a resident of Ephesus (4:19), comforted Paul rather than deserting him and was not ashamed of what Paul had encountered. He “refreshed” (*anepsuxen* – a word meaning “to cool again” (Robertson, 615) Paul again and again. This is the only occurrence of this word in the NT. He so ministered to Paul often by means of “faithful friendship and Christian brotherhood” (Gould, 635). So, his mercy toward Paul prompted Paul with the prayerful wish that his household would receive mercy from God.

The word “my chain” (*ten alusin mou*) denotes Paul being bound to a soldier.

- 1:17 - “but when he came to Rome he diligently searched for me and found me”

The diligence and length to which Onesiphorus expended himself in behalf of Paul is now asserted. While in Rome, it was his practice to intermittently search and find Paul. “No wonder is it that Paul felt such gratitude for such an example of Christian brotherhood!” (Gould, 635). And he did so “at the risk of his own life apparently” (Robertson, 615).

- 1:18 - “May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that day; and you know very well how great services he rendered in Ephesus”

Paul’s wish for the Lord’s mercy on him in the day of judgment is most commendable and consistent with Paul’s appreciation for others in their own form of ministries. For some reason, Onesiphorus had been “away from his family and probably still at Rome, delayed in his return home [perhaps] by concern for the beloved apostle” (Simpson, 129).

The testimony about Onesiphorus, however, exceeds what he did for Paul, including also “how great services he rendered in Ephesus.”

So, what he did for Paul “was, therefore, only one instance in a life marked throughout by deeds of self-sacrificing faith and love . . . indi-

cating the general kindness and beneficence of his conduct in the church” (Harvey, 92).

F. Strength in Service (2:1-13)

2:1 - “You, therefore, my child, must be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus”

This verse opens with an emphatic “You” (*Su*) – as in 3:10 and 1 Tim.6:11- to stress the intensity of Paul’s appeal to Timothy and his relations to the church. This is no minor note.

The word “therefore” (*oun*) occurs for the second time in this letter (1:8), and will occur again in v. 3, 21; 4:1. It forms the sensible conclusion to be drawn from chapter 1. More specifically, it draws an inference from the sound teaching (1:13-14) and the support (1:15-18). That is, in light of the sound teaching or well-grounded words of faith and love, the desertion of “all who are in Asia,” and the devotion or support of Onesiphorus and his family, Paul’s imperative to Timothy to “be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus” is sensible. After all, “the source of strength lies in God’s grace or unmerited favor” (Lanski, 777).

The word “strong” (*endunamou*) is present tense imperative for Timothy to keep on being “strengthened inwardly” (Vincent, 295).. The root word here is “power” (*dunamis* – meaning “ability”), and this power or ability to properly carry out his mission of ministry is located exclusively “in Christ Jesus.” To be separated from Him is to be separated from this ability. So, this strengthening is not the result of mere passivity on Timothy’s part but requires his “co-operation with God” (White, 160), despite any and all weaknesses he may possess. After all, as Paul states in 2 Cor. 12:9, “God’s strength is brought to completion in our weaknesses.”

It appears that this verse is developed more fully in vs. 3-13.

2:2 - “and the things which you heard from me before many witnesses, you must commit to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also”

Obviously, Paul was Timothy’s main teacher, although there may have been others not noted. The “many witnesses” (*pollon marturon*) possibly includes “Barnabas, Lois, Eunice, and others at Timothy’s baptism or ordination” (Hinson, 344), as well as others for whom speculations can only be submitted. This expression is also found in 1 Tim. 6:12.

Paul’s imperative stands, regardless of the fuzziness of identifying the “many witnesses”: “you must commit to faithful men” “the things which you heard from me.” The word “commit” (*parathou*) means “to deposit” (Robertson, 616), “to give over, entrust, commend, put before in teach-

ing” (BAG, 628); “the *general duty* of instructing other *faithful men*” (Bengel, 544) who are worthy recipients of such teaching.

The purpose of this teaching is not a deadend street endeavor. As Robertson (616) phrases it, “This is the way to pass on the torch of the light of the knowledge of God in Christ. Paul taught Timothy who will teach others who still teach still others, an endless chain of teacher-training and gospel propaganda.” These “faithful men” “will be able to hand it on to others in all of its original purity and power” (Gould, 637).

It appears that this verse is developed more fully in vs. 14-26.

In verses 3-6, Paul uses three analogies to convey the significance of strength in service: **soldier** (v. 3: active endurance; .v. 4: avoiding entanglements), **athlete** (v. 5: appropriate engagement), and **farmer** (v. 6: awarding efforts).

- 2:3 - “You must share in suffering hardship together with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus”

A third imperative follows: “you must share in suffering hardship together with me” (*sugkakopatheson*). “Hardship,” of course, is seen and experienced in military training (bootcamp, deprivations, etc.) to make soldiers mentally and physically prepared to deal with the rough and rugged challenges in military life. Failure to so prepare and be prepared for these challenges will be a blight on soldiers. **Active endurance** is the name of the game in the military.

- 2:4 - “No one serving as a soldier is being mixed up in the affairs of everyday life, in order that he may please the one who enlisted soldiers”

The necessity to **avoid entanglements** in the affairs of everyday life outside the military parameters is also well understood. That is, a dutiful soldier must have “neither time nor interest for ordinary *civilian pursuits*” (Gealy, 480). His primary objective must be to please the one who enlisted him and others under whom he must serve.

- 2:5 - “And also if someone competes in an athletic contest, he is not to be crowned unless he competes lawfully”

The athlete must also be devoted to practicing, engaging in, and playing by the rules of the game. If he does not follow **appropriate engagement** policies and procedures, he cannot be successful at winning; Self-discipline is not optional; self-determined practices are not allowed; self-selected methods are not permitted. To violate the legal requirements



of any athletic contest is to be disqualified without question.

- 2:6 - “The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive his share of the fruits”

The farmer who toils diligently in planting and harvesting is simply functioning as he should so that his produce may benefit both himself and others. He may benefit by either eating or selling some portion of his produce or both. This is simply the way for **awarding efforts** in farming.

Just as all three must be completely consecrated to their particular pathways, even so, “Paul is calling for complete consecration to the Christian cause” (Noyes, 481).

- 2:7 - “You must consider what I am saying, for the Lord will give you understanding in all things”

The atmosphere here is: “Do you have your ears on?” – “Are you listening?” – “Can you hear what I am saying?” “Do you realize the points I am trying to illustrate?”

If Timothy has any difficulty in comprehending Paul’s points, he assures Timothy that the Lord will grant and guide his understanding or comprehension about these things. That is, Paul “begs Timothy to note them well, lest the application to himself should escape him, suggesting further that he should seek the necessary wisdom and understanding from God” (Hervey, 20).

It is without serious question, however, that the understanding and/or comprehension of these truthful principles “is not limited to pastors” (Trentham, 106).

- 2:8 - “You must remember Jesus Christ Who has been permanently raised from the dead, from David’s seed, in accordance with my gospel”

Paul’s next imperative is urgently needed: “remember” (*mnemoneue*)! There is so much emphasis in Christian churches and circles on the magnification of the death of Jesus that His resurrection from the dead has been minimized or marginalized. Paul uses the perfect tense to stress and highlight the reality that He “has been permanently raised from the dead.”

After all, it was His resurrection from the dead which proved “that Jesus is the Christ.” Cp. Rom. 1:1b-4: Paul was “set apart to preach God’s good news, which long ago He promised through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, about His Son, who on the physical side be-

came a descendant of David, and on the spiritual side proved to be God's Son in power by the resurrection from the dead." All of this is according to the gospel. And anyone who does not equalize these two NT parameters is not preaching the gospel.

To emphasize His death, to the exclusion or minimization of His resurrection is to present a lop-sided gospel which creates depression and sadness. No wonder so many church meetings are not anointed by the Resurrected and Living Christ. It must be bewildering to God Himself that such neglectful preaching is tinged with partial and powerless truths. [Again, see my article on the New Testament's balanced presentation of both His death and resurrection: "Something Critical: The Theme of Easter or Christianity?" on my personal web-site: [archive.org/details/@mandm313](http://archive.org/details/@mandm313).]

2:9 - "in connection with which I am suffering to the point of imprisonment as a criminal, but the Word of God is not being imprisoned"

It is in the sphere of his connection or identification with the gospel that he is suffering "imprisonment as a criminal" – as if he had done some type of evil or wrongdoing which classified him "as a criminal." This connection created both "disgrace" and "danger" of his very life (Bengel, 545).

But even though Paul himself is imprisoned because of his connection with the Word of God, the Word of God itself is not "imprisoned" – i.e., not bound or gaged or restricted. Hervey (20) is a bit exaggerating, perhaps, but his point is not:

The thought of his own bonds, likely soon to be exchanged for the bonds of a martyr's death, awakens the comforting thought, 'Though they bind *me* with an iron chain, they cannot bind the gospel. While I am here, shut up in prison, the Word of God, preached by a thousand tongues, is giving life and liberty to myriads of my brethren of the human race. The tyrant can silence my voice and confine it within the walls of my dungeon; but all the while the sound of the gospel is going through all the earth, its saving words to the ends of the world; and I therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice; and not all the legions of Rome can take this joy from me.'

I pen these words from Dr. Harper Shannon (p. 14):

"The Apostle Paul wrote these words from his imprisonment. He was

suffering like a common evildoer, although he was guilty of nothing but loyalty to Christ and of faithfully propagating the good news of the gospel.

Despite all the problems, difficulties and obstacles, the apostle manifested an optimistic spirit. Circumstances could not quench his enthusiasm. And the key to this optimism is to be found in his statement that the word of God is not bound. This is translated in the Good News Bible, 'But the word of God is not in chains. . . .'

Paul used Jesus Christ himself as the outstanding example of his philosophy. Jesus was met with rejection and opposition. In fact they even crucified him. He was put to death on a cruel cross.

But he was raised from the dead! And the apostle Paul reminded Timothy to remember Jesus Christ and to remember that he was raised from the dead. Timothy was enjoined to remember that this is the gospel that Paul had been preaching. It is the good news to all mankind because it emphasizes that despite all the obstacles and problems, the word of God is not in chains!

Unfortunately, we spend more time defending the Bible and the gospel and the deity of Christ than we do in proclaiming the same. If we believe the Bible to be the infallible, authoritative, inspired word of God, then the greatest demonstration of that fact is not in defending it! But the best evidence of that faith is given when we dig in, discover its message and then exegete it, preach it, teach it, make it known!

There is no room for pettiness and factionalism, for disunity, for jealousy and personal strife. Prophets have always been stoned, but not by other prophets!

Let us make time to empty our own garbage, to extricate ourselves from our own animosities and bitterness, and experience the catharsis of the gospel of loving one another.

Let us as Paul exhorted Timothy remember who Jesus is, and remember the cost of our redemption. In the face of adversity and difficulties the Apostle Paul enjoined to remember Jesus Christ who was crucified yet raised from the dead. Even when we must suffer defeat or setbacks or personal animosity or unjust charges, yet the word of God is not in chains. We have a great God and a great gospel, and the only lack is in its propagation. Let us take the great commission seriously and move forward under the banner of the cross of Jesus Christ. For the word of God is not in chains!"

2:10 - "for which reason I am enduring all things for the sake of the elect, in order that they may also experience salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory"

Because of this superlative significance of the utter boundlessness

of the word of God and its freedom from imprisonment; “because the gospel runs while I am bound” (Bengel, 545); and also for the sake of salvation of the elect, Paul has the confident assurance of the value of suffering and the determination of “enduring” (*hupomeno* – cp. v. 12; cp. the noun *hupomone* in 3:10) such sufferings (trials, troubles, stresses, persecutions, etc.) rather than fleeing from or seeking to avoid them. Paul’s readiness to endure “all things” in order to share the gospel with others “has always been the heart of the missionary motive” (Noyes, 484).

“The elect” (*tous eklektous*) are those whom God has “chosen” and whom He will draw or bring to Himself to “experience salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.” Paul, therefore, is “willing to give himself to be the instrument through whom they hear the gospel, are so drawn to God, and obtain salvation” (Knight, 399).

But Paul’s “endurance is active, not passive: pain is felt as pain, but is recognized as having a moral and spiritual purpose” (White, 163). In light of these variables, Paul is personally practicing “the conditions of success exemplified in the soldier, the athlete, and the farmer (v. 3-6). [For fuller treatment of *election*, see Stagg’s *New Testament Theology*, pp. 84-88; Shank’s *Elect in the Son*; Mullins’ *The Christian Religion in its Doctrinal Expression*, pp. 338-358; Conner’s *Christian Doctrine*, pp. 155-166; Grudem’s *Bible Doctrine*, 282-292.]

The words “with eternal glory” (*meta doxes aioniou*) are antithetical to or in contrast with the “suffering” (cp. 2:3, 9; 4:5). They refer to “the highest object of Christian hope, participation in incorruption and life (cf. 2 Tim. 1:10)” (Hinson, 345). “Salvation may be enjoyed in this life; it will be consummated in eternal glory” (White, 163). As Gealy (484) observes: “Eternal glory for the Christian would be understood to mean life no longer subject to sin and death, frustration and loss, but permanent and unhindered participation in the rich, warm, triumphant, secure life of God himself.”

2:11 - “This is a faithful saying: For we died with Him, we shall also live with Him”

The words “a faithful saying” (*pistos ho logos*) occur here only in this letter, but were used three times in 1 Timothy (1:15; 3:1; 4:9) to underscore the faithfulness of God.

The word “if” is a first class term which assumes the reality of what follows, and may be translated “since.” That is, since the Christian has already died with Christ in His death – pictured in baptism (Rom. 6:3-4), so the Christian “is as surely united with the risen Lord (Rom. 6:5), and thus “shall also live with Him” now and hereafter – cp. John 14:19; Gal. 2:20). In other words, “to the Christian, whether in this

world or in the world to come, life means fellowship with Christ” (Noyes, 485).

2:12 - “If we endure, we shall also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He will also deny us”

“If” is another first class term which assumes the reality of what follows. In light of, because of the Christian’s “enduring” (*hupomenomen* – cp. v. 10; present tense verb which denotes that which continues throughout the Christian’s life) the trials, troubles, and temptations which seek to terminate the Christian’s commitment to following Christ, “we shall also reign with Him” (*sumbasileusomen*). This word occurs only one other time in the NT: 1 Cor. 4:8. However, this idea of reigning with Christ occurs elsewhere in the NT: Mt. 19:28; Lk. 22:29-30; 1 Cor. 6:2; Rev. 3:21; 20:4, 6; 22:5.

This “reigning with Christ” has a motive: “it is presented as an encouragement for enduring [life’s trials and troubles in the present but here] lays emphasis on the future ‘reigning with Christ,’ which, though it is so different from the present experience of enduring, is ‘also’ a result of that enduring” (Knight, 405).

But a warning is also in place for those who are faithless: “if we deny Him, He will also deny us.” “If” is another first class term which assumes the reality of what follows. This is an echo of the words of Jesus in Mt. 10:33; Mk. 8:38; Lk. 12:9. Gealy (485) points out that such a one “is well advised to remember that if he should prove disloyal, the Christ with whom he might have reigned will deny him before his Father who is enthroned in heaven.”

Lenski’s (795) words are not to be mitigated: “no retribution could be more just. Only one who has confessed can turn about and deny. He who by denial now cuts himself off from Christ and so faces him on the last day must not expect that Christ will be equally false and will then confess where he ought to deny.”

Harvey (98) states:

Such denial, as it involved a preferring of self above him [Christ], was itself proof that there had been no real death with him [Christ]; and he will therefore say to such at the last day: “I *never* knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity!” (Mt. 7:23). The denial of Christ here intended is not the outcome of temporary weakness of faith, as in the case of Peter (Lk. 22:54-62), but of the nature of the man, in whom self has never been crucified and Christ has never been enthroned.

- 2:13 - “If we are faithless, That One remains faithful, for He is not able to deny Himself”

Another first class term (“if) opens this closing section of scripture. This reference to being “faithless” (*apistoumen*) refers to all who are devoid of the Christian faith, have never exercised such faith, and have never been regenerated. This present tense verb indicates a continual pattern or ongoing state of resistance to the Christian faith. It does not, as indicated above and in the case of Peter, refer to any temporary failure to exercise faith in the face of a moment – “which may occur in the life of even a regenerate person” (Harvey, 98).

However, for those who have never been faithful, God “remains [is] faithful” and cannot alter His promise to fulfill His word, even in the form of separation from Him forever. God’s conduct has in the past and will in the future always be consistent with His character. “As the unchangeable Jehovah, his word of threatening is as sure as his word of promise: both rest on the immutable foundation of his eternal truth and faithfulness” (Harvey, 98).

As Augustine said, “Three things are impossible to God – to die, to lie, and to be deceived.”

G. Shameless Pursuits (2:14-18)

Again, v. 2 is developed more fully in verses 14-26.

- 2:14 - “You must keep on reminding them of these things by declaring solemnly and emphatically in the presence of God not to quarrel about words, which is not useful, bringing destruction upon those hearing it”

The present tense imperative verb “keep on reminding” (*hupomimeske*) has its noun counterpart in 1:5: *hupomesin* (“remembrance”). The word here translated “these things” (*tauta*) is the same word in v. 2 in regard to what a godly or faithful person should or should not teach.

The participle translated “by declaring solemnly and emphatically” (*diamarturomenos*) is in the present tense and indicates the type of action that is to be carried out in the imperative, as the above translation conveys.

The words “in the presence of God,” or “before God” (*enopion tou theou*) leaves no question: the ultimate and final accountability for such teaching rests solely in God Himself.

The specific declaration is in the negative: “not to quarrel about

words” (*me logomachein* – here only in the NT). That is, the endless and/or “useless” quarreling over the meaning of words only leads to straying or departing from the truth. Such quarreling only brings “destruction” (*katastrophe* – “to turn down or against” – in the NT only here and 2 Pt. 2:6). It means “to overthrow” the truth for the hearers and leads to their ruination or detriment.

- 2:15 - “You must be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a workman with no need to be ashamed, consistently interpreting correctly the message of the truth”

Here is another imperative but this time in the aorist tense which denotes “summary action – ‘an action to be undertaken at once’” (Dana and Mantey, 300). Guthrie (159) says this command to be “diligent” (*spoudason*) encompasses “persistent ‘zeal’” and that without delay. The urgency and intensity of this imperative carries over to the infinitive: “to present” (*parastesai* – which occurs again 4:17; it means “to bring into one’s presence, show, offer, dedicate, provide, send, prove”). This involves self-discipline which is always needed “because the most effective refutation of error is for the teacher to be the living embodiment of the truth, with God’s approval upon him” (Guthrie, 159).

God’s approval, of course, is what is meant by the words “approved to God” (*dokimon to theo*). It is not the approval, applause, or adoration of people which is the measuring rod of the validity and quality of one’s Christian workmanship. With the word *dokimon* Paul “lifts the whole question of attestation out of the hands of men and sets it in those of God. God alone decides this issue, which is not subject to human categories of judgment. This means, however, that the question what constitutes true attestation is posed the more urgently” (Grundman, 258).

Paul here labels the Christian leader as “a workman” (*ergaten*), a term Paul used in 2 Cor. 13 about “deceitful workers”; in Phil. 3:2 of “evil workers”; and in 1 Tim. 5:18 as a “worthy laborer.” He uses it here with a positive tone because the Christian ministry and minister is engagement in energetic activities.

The word translated “no need to be ashamed” (*anepaischunton* – occurring here only in the NT). It is the manner or way in which his ministry is carried out that is liable to create shame. So, to conduct his ministry in an appropriate manner – which will be specified in the rest of this verse and verse 16 – will ensure that “thy own conscience cannot shame” (Bengel, 546), let alone others.

So, the way to avoid this potential “shame,” is “consistently interpreting correctly the message of the truth” (*orthotomounta ton logon*

*tes aletheias*). The major idea in the word “interpreting correctly” (*orthotomooivta* – a present tense participle to convey a consistent pattern of interpreting correctly; here only in the NT) is, indeed, that of “correctness” (Knight, 258) by “cutting straight” (Robertson, 619), “correctly handles” (NIV).

Koster (112), however, takes a different twist as to the meaning and application of this word:

In his conduct Timothy must ‘speak the word of truth aright,’ i.e., follow it. When he puts his acts under the word of truth he is worthy before God and he need not be ashamed. He is superior to the false teachers, not because he can present the word better, nor because he offers it in a theologically legitimate form, but because he follows this word of truth aright in his own life, and thus confirms it.

2:16 - “You must keep on turning your back with contempt on the godless, empty babblings which bellow for more godlessness”

Another present tense imperative calling for constant and continual action of “turning your back with contempt” (*periistaso* – “shun, avoid, keep clear of; stand around” – occurring only three other times in the NT: Jn. 11:42; Acts 25:7; Tit. 3:9) on “godless, empty babblings” (*bebelous kenophonias*). The word “godless” (*bebelous* – “vile, irreligious, superfluous” and occurs four other times in the NT: 1 Tim. 1:9; 4:7; 6:20; Heb. 12:16.

The word “empty babblings” (*kenophonias* – “foolish talk”; occurs only one other time in the NT: 1 Tim. 6:20). “The good minister will hold strictly to the received faith, avoiding the **godless chatter**, the worldly nonsense of the heretical teachers” (Gealy, 488). Noyes (488) offers these sobering words:

to use the sacred truths and practices of religion merely as the material for verbal combat is a form of profanity. This is the peculiar temptation of those whose calling takes them into the service of the church today. To let familiarity with scripture and hymns lead to flippancy in their use; to forget what great doctrines mean for life and to think of them only as texts for debate; to develop pride of opinion in religious matters until one is constantly defending oneself instead of pleading for loyalty to Christ; to use the language of religion until



all its vitality is squeezed out in the routine of professionalism – these are temptations which beset laymen and clergy alike in the service of the church. We must still be on guard against ‘profane jargon’ which leads to irreligion.

This godless, empty talk is to be avoided because it is “devoid of religious value and consequently leads ‘into more and more impiety’ (NRSV). Such talk is to be avoided, and there will be a progression downward toward [more] ungodliness” (Liefeld, 258).

2:17 - “and their chatterings shall circulate like cancer cells, like the case of Hymenaeus and Philetus”

The word “chatterings” (*ho logos* – “words, teachings”) mean “shall circulate like cancer cells.”

Lenski (801) says this figure of speech means “these people are incurable; their disease ‘will eat’ on and on, and the more one argues with them with the idea of curing them, the more their disease is caused to spread in their system.”

The word “cancer cells” (*gaggraina* – “gangrene”; “to gnaw, to eat, an eating, spreading disease” (Robertson, 620) – here only in the NT. Gealy (489) notes: “Like a repulsive and fatal disease it will destroy the church itself if tolerated. It does not feed the souls of men; it feeds upon them.”

Paul singles out two – Hymenaeus and Philetus – as examples of those who succumbed to this godless chatter. Hymenaeus is mentioned in 1 Tim. 1:20, apparently one of the two Paul expelled from the church. There is no other mention of Philetus. The next verse provides further specifics about them.

2:18 - “both of whom have gone astray concerning the truth by saying that the resurrection has already occurred, and are bringing to ruin the faith of some”

Both of these characters bought the scheme of the false teachers/ings that a spiritual resurrection (of some nature) was possible, or even likely probable. This would fit, of course, into the Greek philosophical teaching of the immortality of the soul. But they denied the possibility and probability of a physical resurrection of the body. By doing so, they denied the physical resurrection of Jesus and the completion of God’s redemptive actions in the resurrection of Christians at the final coming of Jesus.

The perpetration of even this single aspect of their false teachings was

enough “to ruin the faith of some.” Indeed, “to spiritualize the resurrection in this way subverts the faith. Any denial of the *physical* resurrection, as Paul has shown so fully in 1 Cor. 15:12-20, involves denial of Christ’s physical resurrection and thus destroys the very basis of the faith” (Lenski, 801). Cp. Rom. 1:4.

The present tense verb translated “bringing to ruin” (*anatrepousin*) indicates an ongoing poisonous process of “overturning, upsetting” and “*causing to fall*” (BAG, 62) from the faith by “some” (*tinon*). At least, the word “some” denotes that the outward spread of this poison was not extensive or all-encompassing.

#### H. Solid Foundation (2:19)

2:19 - “Nevertheless, the solid foundation of God is standing having this seal, **The Lord knows those who are His**, and, Everyone who names the name of the Lord must abstain from wickedness”

The word “nevertheless” (*mentoi*) is a strong adversative pitch to deflect any potential despair or discouragement on Timothy’s part: “the cause of truth rests on God’s firm foundation” (Harvey, 101). Despite the false teachers/ings and the end-time evils within the church, the foundation upon which Christian ministry and leadership is formulated is none other than God Himself. This “foundation” (*themelios* – cp. Rom. 15:20; 1 Cor. 3:10, 11, 12; Eph. 2:20; 1 Tim. 6:19) “contains the idea of solidity, immovableness” (Lenski, 803) because it is the church or the body of Christ. That is, it is (1) “solid” (*stereos* – “firm, hard, steadfast” [BAG, 774] – elsewhere in NT: Heb. 5:12, 14; 1 Pt. 5:9) in the sense that it cannot be banged or broken into pieces and rendered null and void by these babblers. (2) “stands or is still standing” (*hesteken* – perfect tense denoting a state or condition of permanence). It is and always will be the channel through which God’s ministry is conducted. (3) “seal” (*sphragida*) is what “proves genuineness or ownership” (Barclay, 176), and has two features: (a) they belong to God; the words “**The Lord knows those who are His**” (cp. Numbers 16:5) “points to such knowledge as involves love, approval, choice” (Harvey, 101) – cp. Amos 3:2; Jn. 10:14, 25, 27, 28; Mt. 7:25; Gal. 4:9; 1 Jn. 4:6-8. (b) they have departed from godlessness; “everyone who names the name of the Lord must abstain from wickedness.” The verb “must abstain” (*aposteto*) is an aorist imperative which calls for prompt and immediate action of “keeping away from, turning away from.” This is an essential part of the “seal” and not a mere afterthought or appendix. According to Barclay (178), this is

not to say that [the church] consists of perfect people. If

that were so, there would be no Church. It has been said that the great interest of God is not so much in where a man has reached, as in the direction in which he is facing. And the Church consists of those whose faces are turned to righteousness. They may often fail and the goal may sometimes seem distressingly far away, but their faces are ever set in the right direction.

I. Samples (2:20-21)

2:20 - “Now a large house is not only [filled] with vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and pottery, indeed some for honor and for dishonor”

Paul here uses another analogy, figure of speech, or sample of items found in “a large house” – it is more likely that the variety of vessels or mixture of various items would be found in “a large house, owned by a wealthy person” (Liefeld, 260). The vessels “of gold and silver” would be items such as valuable pots, pans, dishes, etc. which would be of “honor” or honorable recognition and expressed appreciation. They would be prized and kept for continued usage.

The vessels “of wood and pottery,” on the other hand, would be items that are cheaper, less valuable, and perhaps even disposed of after a single use or two. They receive only “dishonor” in the sense that their disposal would not bring about any sense of sadness over their loss, even realizing that they were probably purchased with the intent or purpose to dispose of them so quickly or readily.

The point of these sampled items is readily adapted to the true teachings of Paul, Timothy, and others about the gospel; and the false teachings of these seducers who stood opposed to the true teachings of the gospel.

2:21 - “Therefore, if someone may cleanse himself from these things, he shall be a vessel of honor, being set apart, useful to the Master, being prepared for every good work”

The word “therefore” (*oun*) assumes that his analogous point is well recognized, received, and appropriated.

The word “if” (*ean*) is a third class conditional term which indicates that it may or may not be properly acted upon, especially in light of the subjunctive mood and middle voice in the verb “cleanse himself” (*ekkathare heauton*) – “to clean out, to cleanse thoroughly; the setting aside of shameful things” (Hauck, 430). This presents a case which cannot be approached with a flippant or casual attitude.

The person who chooses to so “cleanse himself from these [shameful]

things [itemized earlier as end-time evils (3:1-9) and throughout this letter] shall prove himself to be “a vessel of honor” as defined as: (1) “being set apart” (*hegiasmenon* – commonly translated “sanctified” or “dedicated to holy uses and to be cleansed from defilement” [Gould, 645]); (2) “useful to the Master” (*euchreston to despote*) – that is, enlisted and employed by Jesus Christ for holy purposes, tasks, or assignments determined by the Master. (3) “being prepared for every good work”- The word “prepared” (*hetoimasmenon* – another perfect tense, passive voice which indicates being on the receiving end of the grace which makes one “fit to be used in Christian service: the penitent (Lk. 18:14); the childlike (Mt. 18:3); the spiritually discerning (Mt. 6:19-20, 33; the wholly committed (Lk. 14:26); the loving (Mt. 22:36-39); those who have faith (Mt. 17:20)” (Noyes, 493-494).

This “seems to be an almost extravagant expression . . . the glorious possibility that, through a miracle of grace, God’s people may be readied for any task He may appoint them. The prospect thus set forth is almost breath-catching in its wonder!” (Gould, 645).

#### J. Servanthood Suggestions (2:22-26)

2:22 - “Now you must constantly be fleeing from youthful desires and continually following after righteousness, faith, love, peace along with those who are calling upon the Lord out of a pure heart”

The verb translated “you must constantly be fleeing” (*pheuge*) is a present tense imperative reflected in the translation itself. The word means “to be on the run from, to keep escaping, to keep shunning or turning away from” one item in particular: “youthful desires” (*neoterikas epithumias*), i.e., “uncontrolled impulses” (Hinson, 348) “in which young men indulge, 1 John ii. 16, and which injure the *purity of heart*, mentioned presently [at the end of this verse] and ver. 21” (Bengel, 548). These youthful desires, of course, are the other extremes of “old wives’ fables” in 1 Tim. 4:7.

The verb translated “you must continually follow after” (*dioke*) is another present tense imperative reflected in the translation itself. The word actually means “*pursue* [which is] stronger than *follow*. [This is] a favourite word with Paul to denote the pursuit of moral and spiritual ends” (Vincent, 307). Cp. Rom. 9:30, 31; 12:13; 1 Cor. 14:1; Phil. 3:12.

The objects of this pursuit are particularized: “righteousness, faith, love, peace.” The “youthful lusts” are “hostile to this purity” (Bengel, 548) pursuit: (1) “righteousness” (*dikaiosunen*) means “what God requires; what is right; uprightness, justice, righting wrong; religious duties *or* acts of charity (Mt. 6:1). (2) “faith” (*pistin*) means “fidelity”

or “faithfulness, i.e., reliability, faith or trust in God” (Knight, 421). (3) “love” (*agapen*) means love of God and neighbor. (4) “peace” (*eirenen*) “denotes tranquility, harmony, and stability” (Knight, 421). This was urgently needed “because the peace of the church was threatened” (Hinson, 348). “While avoiding the company of evil men, he is to cultivate friendly relations with those who are sincere worshippers of the same God as himself” (White, 168). (5) “along with all those who are calling upon the Lord out of a pure heart” – This is a further definition of those with whom “peace” is to be pursued. It means “in conjunction with or in association with or as defining the extent to which” the attitude [noted in 1-4] is to be pursued. That is, “pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace in partnership with all who call upon the Lord” (Hervey, 23). In order to do this, there must be a “separation from evil company and fellowship with the Lord’s people and seeking the graces of the Spirit” (Wyclife, 875).

The words “out of a pure heart” mean “in complete sincerity” (Hinson, 349) and one cleansed from sin. As Lenski (813-814) notes: “Timothy and all his true company are ever to stand and to work together. It is very easy for clean hearts to find each other.” This phrase also occurred in 1 Timothy 1:5.

2:23 - “and you must have nothing to do with foolish and ignorant speculations knowing that they generate fights”

Another present tense imperative opens this verse: “you must have nothing to do with” (*paraitou* – “avoid, refuse, keep away from” – here only in this letter but used in 1 Tim. 4:7; 5:11; Tit. 3:10; (cp. Heb. 12:19, 25 (twice); Lk. 14:18, 19; Acts. 25:11).

The object of this ‘avoidance’ is “foolish and stupid speculations” (*moras kai apaideutous zeteseis*). The word “foolish” (*moras*) means “dull, sluggish, stupid; flat, insipid” (Vincent, 307).

The word “ignorant” (*apaideutous* – here only in the NT) means “undisciplined: questions of an *untrained* mind, carried away with novelties: questions which do not proceed from a trained habit of thinking” (Vincent, 307). “uneducated; ‘speculations of a half-educated mind’ (Parry)” (Robertson, 621). “Misunderstandings are a fruitful source of strife” (White, 168)

The word “speculations” (*zeteseis* – cp. 1 Tim. 1:4; 6:4; cp. Jn. 3:25; Acts 25:20; Tit. 3:9) means “questionings” (Vincent, 307); “controversy, investigation” (BAG, 339).

The verb “knowing” (*eidos*) is in the perfect tense denoting a state or condition of locked-in knowledge, unwilling to budge and receive new or different information. The result of this mindset is that these “foolish and ignorant speculations “generate fights” (*gennosin machas*):“beget

battles – see 2:14” (Robertson, 621); “*breed quarrels*” (Hinson, 349). “There is no other instance of the metaphorical use of this word [*gen-nosin*] in the N. T.” (White, 168). The word “fights” (*machas* – cp. 2 Cor. 7:5; Tit. 3:9; Jam. 4:1) is always in the plural in the NT and “always used of nonphysical conflict” (Knight, 422).

2:24 - “and the servant of the Lord must not be quarrelsome but kind toward everyone, able to teach, putting up with evil”

The phrase “the servant of the Lord” here means the man of God; “the one whom God has specially singled out for service” (Hinson, 349). It is used in “the technical sense of minister. The phrase, though common in the O.T., appears only here in the N.T., which regularly has ‘God’ or ‘Christ’ instead of ‘Lord.’ The passage may reflect the ‘servant’ passages of Isa. 43:1-3; 53 – (see on Tit. 1:1)” (Gealy, 495). The man of God is to run rapidly away from the kind of quarrelsomeness generated by these false teachers. The word “quarrelsome” (*machesthai* – cp. Jn. 6:52; Acts. 7:26; Jam. 4:2) is the verbal form of the noun “fights” in v. 23. There must be no “verbal quibbles” (Robertson, 621) by the man of God. He “should not be a bitter controversialist” (Bengel, 548).

Rather, there are four traits by which the man of God must be noted: (1) “kind” (*epion*) – “affable, mild – only here and 1 Thes. 2:7. It means “gentle” (BAG, 349). Vine (485) notes that this word was “frequently used by Greek writers as characterizing a nurse with try-children or a teacher with refractory scholars, or of parents toward their children. In 1 Thess. 2:7, the Apostle uses it of the conduct of himself and his fellow-missionaries toward the converts at Thessalonica (cp. 2 Cor. 11:13, 20); here of the conduct requisite for a servant of the Lord.” (2) “able to teach” (*didaktikon* – only here and 1 Tim. 3:2). “This implies not only competency and readiness in teaching, but even especially patience and diligence” (Bengel, 549). BAG (19) suggests “*skilful in teaching*.” This word describes one who is not “impatient, harsh, and intolerant before ignorance, slowness of comprehension, or even antagonism; he is not one who nags and scolds and lashes with sarcasm and scorn” (Gealy, 495). (3) “putting up with evil” (*anexikakon* – here only in the NT) means “he accepts insult and injury without resentment. He does not strike back” (Gealy, 495). This refers “not only of wrong intentionally inflicted on us, but also of the stupidity, prejudice, misconstruction, and manifold weaknesses of men, which the minister must meet, and which often prove his severest trials. Under all these evils, especially opposition, he is to be patient, forbearing, as was his Master” (Harvey, 104).

2:25 - “correcting with gentleness those who are placing themselves in opposition, lest God may give repentance to them for knowledge of truth”

(4) “correcting with gentleness” (*en prauteti paideuonta*) – The word “correcting” (*paideuonta*) means seeking to recover those “who err from right thinking . . . and right living” (White, 169). The qualification to this correcting is “with gentleness” (*en prauteti*) or meekness, “for they realize that they are not the creators of Christian truth, they are only the vessels through which it is carried to others” (Trentham, 120). Trentham continues, “they are the steady, disciplined, dependable channels through which God may send his truth with the assurance that pride will never create a controversy that will clog the channel nor color the truth.”

The object of this “correcting with gentleness” is “those who are placing themselves in opposition” to the core and standard teachings of the Christian faith. “The aim of correction is the rescue of the offender, not his condemnation, by his repentance and return to the knowledge of the truth” (Hinson, 349).

The gentle, meek Christian servant or minister knows that he himself, however, is incapable of generating or producing the needed repentance by his knowledge, skills, or passion. It is not his aim to trample underfoot or “run roughshod over the opponents” (Trentham, 120). Only God can generate repentance or a “change in the direction of one’s will and manner of life, in this case, towards the knowledge of the truth, i.e., the authentic Christian message” (Hinson, 349). It is only “where *God* goes before that *the work* of his *servant* is successful” (Bengel, 549).

2:26 - “and they may regain their senses and escape out of the snare of the devil, i.e., by having been permanently captured alive by Him for That One’s will”

The continued emphasis in this verse is on the fact that only God’s action can produce repentance. That action is uniquely set forth in three perspectives. By God’s initiative, the following occurs: (1) “they may regain their senses and escape” (*anaepsosin* – only here in the NT) or “return to soberness like awaking out of a drunken stupor” (Vincent, 309). Indeed, “it means literally ‘to recover from drunkenness,’ hence, ‘to come to one’s self, ‘to come to a right mind’” (Hervey, 24); “return to soberness out of the devil’s snare” (Vincent, 309).

This ‘regain and escape’ is “out of the snare of the devil” (*ek tes tou diabolou pagidos*). The word “snare” (*pagidos* – “trap, entanglement” occurring in Lk. 21:35; Rom. 11:9; 1 Tim. 3:7; 6:9) means “things that bring danger or death, suddenly and unexpectedly” (BAG, 607). The word “devil” (*diabolou*) is always used in the NT for that “one particular powerful and evil spiritual figure” (Knight, 425) whose

desire, drive, and design it to sets traps for people in order to bring about their fall, ruination, and damnation. These false teachers were mere puppets in his spiritual warfare of opposition to the truths of God.

But God's intervention changes things!

The subjunctive mood in the verb "they *may* regain their senses and escape" denotes that such a 'regain and escape' could only occur as a result of God's prior or antecedent intervention activity. This, in fact, is seen in Paul's use of the perfect tense, passive voice in the verb: "having been permanently captured alive" (*ezogremenoi* – occurring in the NT only here and Lk. 5:10 in relation to Peter: "from now on you will be catching men" - but there in the present tense).

Here, again, the perfect tense is used to denote that this "regain and escape" are contingent on God's having "caught or captured alive" those who were in the spiritual death grip of the devil.

God's "capture" involved giving them "life" for now and forevermore. That is, as the perfect tense denotes a state or condition of completed action: those whom God "caught remain caught and alive." This action on God's part is what makes or made the "regain and escape" possible. Plus, it all took place "for the will of That One" (*eis to ekeinou thelema*). It all is in accordance with God's will.

The human action which makes the "may" become an experienced reality is the "repentance" which God alone initiates and brings about. Again, "the emphasis in the whole passage lies upon God's action in granting repentance" (Hinson, 349) and bringing about deliverance *from* the death grip of the devil and *into* God's life-giving grip. His grip is of such a nature that no trap or snare may be set in order to make possible a recapture by the devil: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, Who gave them [*perfect tense denoting a state or condition of completed action*] to Me is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one" (John 10:27-30).

### III END-TIME EVILS (3:1-9)

#### A. Specific Sins (3:1-5)

3:1 - "And realize this, that in last days, perilous times shall come"

The words "in last days" (*en eschatais hemerais*) are used in "the sense of what is last in time. . . . The end [of time] began with the coming of Jesus (Hb. 1:2; 1 Pt. 1:20 – where the term *chronon* is used instead of



*hemerais*). Indeed, as will be seen, the terms *hemerais* [“days”], *chronon* [“times”], and *hora* [“hour”] are used interchangeably.

the early Christian writings also see their own present as the last time, demonstrated on the one hand by the outpouring of the Spirit (Ac. 2:17: *en tais eschatais hemerais*) and on the other by evil times, by scoffers, by the coming of Antichrist, etc. (2 Tm. 3:1; Jm. 5:3: *en eschatais hemerais*; 2 Pt. 3:3: *epi eschaton ton hemeron*; Jd. 18: *epi exchatou tou chronou*; 1 Jn. 2:18: *eschate hora*; etc.

So, *last days* should not always be understood in the sense of some far off, yet to be realized or experienced, expectations which do not affect the present and always refers to the distant future. In fact, the words “perilous times” (*kairoi chalepoi*) indicate the various forms of sufferings which characterize life in each and every present age: they “will be present” (*enstesontai* – future middle indicative) (Oepke, 544). As Knight (429) notes, “the future tense here expresses certainty.” White (169) stresses that Paul “regards the time now present as part of the last days.”

The “days, times, hour” – whenever and wherever they are – will be *chalepoi* (“difficult, hard, full of trouble, violent, fierce” because of the various types of evil or wickedness that are perpetrated by people – a fact that has been consistently demonstrated throughout human history. Some of the specifics of this evil or wickedness or “widespread moral decay” (Croskery, 45) are itemized in the next four verses:

- 3:2 - “For men shall be lovers of themselves, money-lovers, boasters, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, thankless, irreligious”

The verb “shall be” (*esontai*) indicates that these type people shall be “of higher rank and more numerous in the Church than ever: ver. 5” (Bengel, 550).

(1) “lovers of themselves” (*philautoi*) – This comes first because when God and others are not first in one’s life, self-centeredness, self-coddling, self-preservation, and self-promotion dominate the very center of one’s being. Bengel (550) calls this “the first root of evil.”

Trentham (122) is jolting: “When man loves self more than God he becomes his own god, and the pathos of this fact is that he is left with such an inadequate god. Out of love of self comes covetousness, for lovers of self must pamper themselves. Centering all their worship in themselves, they become proud, overbearing, abusive scoffers.”

Croskery (45) says this “is regarded by many theologians as the root-principle of all sin. . . . the hard represser of love.”

- (2) “money-lovers” (*philarguroi*) – This refers to “*miserliness, avarice*” (BAG, 866), and “has been called ‘the daughter of selfishness’” (Croskery, 45).
- (3) boasters” (*alazones*) – These people reveal their character by their words; “ostentatious in speech” (Croskery, 46); they wander about “full of empty and boastful professions of cures and other feats which they could accomplish” (Finlayson, 51).
- (4) “arrogant” (*hyperphanoi*) – This encompasses being “*haughty, proud*” (BAG, 849); “full of pride and contempt for others” (Croskery, 46). They “*show themselves above their fellows*. In the glass of their own minds, they behold themselves standing along with others; and the comparison they make is in their own favor” (Finlayson, 51).
- (5) “blasphemers” (*blasphemoi*) – This involves being “*slandorous, pronounce a defaming judgment, scurrilous words*” (BAG, 142); “full of insults to men” (Croskery, 46); “those who use evil words to each other, i.e., words of contempt, or words of bitterness” (Finlayson, 51).
- (6) “disobedient to parents” (*goneusin apeitheis*) – As Bengel (55) notes, “the character of the times is to be gathered especially from the manners of the young”; no sense of “filial duty” (Croskery, 46).
- (7) “thankless” (*acharistoi*) – Being “*ungrateful*” (BAG, 127). This item tends to flow from disobedience to parents. “The younger generation are to show impatience of being ruled by their parents, which is sure to grow into impatience in respect of all rightful rule” (Finlayson, 51).
- (8) “irreligious” (*anosioi*) – This denotes being “*unholy, wicked*” (BAG, 71). “The unholy are those who have no reverence or love in their hearts for these everlasting sanctities . . . the most sacred bonds are to be discarded” (Finlayson, 51-52).

3:3 - “without natural affection, truce-breakers, slanderers, uncontrolled, untamed, haters of good”

- (1) “without natural affection” (*astorgoi*) – “*unloving*” (BAG, 117). “Affection is what sweetens life. In the grievous times affection is to die out, even for those for whom nature specially claims affection” (Finlayson, 52).
- (2) “truce-breakers” (*aspondoi*) – This indicates being “*irreconcilable*” (BAG, 116); “refusing to halt hostilities” (Trentham, 122). It indicates “men are not to come to terms with those who have given them offence, but are to pursue them with all the might of their vengeance” (Finlayson, 52).  
This is the only occurrence of this word in the NT.
- (3) “slanderers” (*diaboloi*) – This refers to those “who deliberately lied and thus instigated quarrels” (Trentham, 123); “the disposition to bring the good down to the level of the base” (Croskery, 46).

- These people “attack one another with falsehoods” (Finlayson, 52).
- (4) “uncontrolled” (*akrateis*) – This means “*not master of one’s self, intemperate; without self-control, dissolute*” (BAG, 32). This applies “both to their tongue, and their appetite, and everything else” (White, 170); “the absence of all restraint from the law, human and divine” (Croskery, 46).
  - (5) “untamed” (*anemeroi*) – This denotes being “*savage, brutal*” (BAG, 65); “the savage temper that delights in cruelty” (Croskery, 46). The loss of self-control leads “to deeds of violence” (Finlayson, 52). This is the only occurrence of this word in the NT.
  - (6) “haters of good” (*aphilathoi*) – That is, “*not loving the good*” (BAG, 126); “the ‘despisers’ of good had so degenerated that they were no longer capable of affection for anything” (Trentham, 123). “With evil so active in them, the presence of good men will be burdensome to them” (Finlayson, 52).

3:4 - “betrayers, reckless, being puffed up with continual conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God”

- (1) “betrayers” (*prodotai*) – This indicates being a “*traitor*” (BAG, 711); “the class of men who could betray their Christian brethren to their persecutors, or behave falsely in any of their existing relationships” (Croskery, 46). This word is found only 2 other times in the NT: Lk. 6:16; Ac. 7:52.
- (2) “reckless” (*propeteis*) - This involves being “*rash, thoughtless*” (BAG, 716). This word occurs only one other time in the NT: Acts 19:36. This involves those “headstrong souls who will let nothing prevent them from having their own way” (Trentham, 123).
- (3) “being puffed up with continual conceit” (*tetuphomenoi*) – This means to “*becloud, delude; be blinded, become foolish; stupid*” (BAG, 838). This refers to “those who are so swollen with conceit that they are literally wrapped up in conceit and folly” (Trentham, 123). “The explanation of their daringness is, that they have no right sense of their own position before God – their insignificance, impotence, and responsibility” (Finlayson, 52). This is a perfect tense verb which indicates being locked into this state or condition of permanence.
- (4) “lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (*philodonoi mallon e philotheoi*) – This means “*given over to pleasure*” (BAG, 867) in the place of “*loving God*” (BAG, 868). Bengel (550) says “pleasure destroys the love and sense of God.” This denotes “a dissipated class under a Christian profession, who have no serious pursuits, and prefer the friendship of the world to the friendship of God” (Croskery, 46). This word is “an antithesis” (Hervey, 40) to the word “lovers of

God.” “Pleasure will be preferred to God” (Finlayson, 52). This word denotes “not lawful and wise enjoyment, but a carnal sensuousness which often leads to sensuality. We see what an absorbing power pleasure is, and how by degrees it destroys the sense of duty and ignores the voice of conscience” (Stratham, 50). Stratham continues:

Love *will* surely be exercised in some form. We are so constituted to love something. We find that there is sometimes an aesthetic sensuousness that finds pleasure in immoral ‘art’ – where God is not, where there is no reverence, no righteousness, no purity, no goodness. And men worship before the shrine of pleasure till they become idolaters, worshipping worldly applause, fleshly satisfaction, and carnal joy. There is a pleasure that is lawful and healthy; without it brain and body, mind and heart, suffer; but it must ever be subordinated to an earnest life and a godly devotion.

This word occurs here only in the NT.

3:5 - “holding on to a form of godliness but the power of it having been denied; keep on turning yourself away from these”

(1) “holding on to a form of godliness but the power of it having been denied” (*echontes morphosin eusebeias ten de dunamin autes ernemenoi*) – This consists of two verbs: “holding on” (*echontes*) in the present tense; and “having been denied” (*hernemenoi*) in the perfect tense, again, denoting a permanent state or condition. The word “form” (*morphosin*) refers to “the outward *appearance*, but without some inward *principle* of godliness” (Bengel, 550). They have “the outward shape without the reality” (Robertson, 623). As Trentham (123) observes: “They take the vocabulary of religion but refuse the reality which it expresses.” “There is no pulsing heart of life in it” (Stratham, 50). This form of godliness “allows evil to work insidiously. It is not so difficult to meet pure heathenism as it is to meet a Christianity that has become heathenish” (Finlayson, 52).

As Gould (647) so strongly and objectively points out, this “is a list of sordid and depressing delineation of human sins. . . . These sins, common in the first century, are flourishing also in alarming measure today. Here are vivid indications of the last days.”

The remaining verb (*apotrepou* – occurring here only in the NT) in this verse is a present tense imperative which calls for constant or continual

“avoiding, keeping away from” such people; do not let them deter, distract, deflate, or drive you away from proper character and conduct. It means to shun or withdraw from such people.

“Paul would have things put on a basis of reality. Between Timothy and such men there could be no sympathy. Why keep up a semblance of fellowship? Both for them and him it was better that the line of demarcation should be drawn, and that all further intercourse should proceed on the footing that they did not belong to the same Christian society” (Finlayson, 52).

## B. Seducers (3:6-8)

3:6 - “For from these are those who are sneaking into the houses and getting control of weak women who have been weighed down with sins, who are continually being led around by numerous desires”

These sordid, sinful “creeps” (obnoxious, disturbingly eccentric people, deviant, or painfully perverted who disrespects the boundaries of others) are always (1) “creeping” (*endunontes* – present tense participle: “worming their way in; entering in on the sly, sneaking” – “privately” [Bengel, 550]); (2) “into the houses and getting control of” [*aichmalotizontes* – present tense participle: “making captive as prisoners, making prey of”] (3) “weak women” (*gunaikaria* – women who are silly [without sense or reason; foolish, ridiculous] and weak morally) – here only in the NT. (4) “who have been weighed down with sins” – the verb “weighed down” (*sopeuo*- only here and Rom. 12:20) is in the perfect tense, passive voice and means that they not only have been but continue to be in a permanent state or condition of being ‘overwhelmed’ with “sins” (*hamartiais*). (5) “continually being led around” (*agomena* – present tense passive voice denoting an ongoing process by which their captors lead them – continually “or from time to time” – Robertson, 624); (6) these captors are their “various desires” (*epithumiais poikilais* – the word *poikilais* indicating numerous kinds, flavors, styles, forms). These various flavors of desires within themselves bring them great “delights” (Bengel, 550).

3:7 - “ever learning but never able to come to knowledge of truth”

These sinfully stained, captivated women are “ever, always, constantly learning” (*manthanonta* – present tense participle) from their false teachers but “the very falseness of the teaching itself makes them not ‘able’ [*dunamena*] to learn the truth” (Knight, 434) which can set them free from the corruptness of their teachers and teachings.

As Robertson (624) notes: “Pathetic picture of these hypnotized women without intellectual power to cut through the fog of words and, though al-

ways learning scraps of things, they never come into the full knowledge (*epignosis*) of the truth in Christ.”

The “knowledge of truth” (*epignosisin aletheias*) is, indeed, the elements of the gospel – repentance, faith, regeneration, godly living – which are essential for deliverance from the domain of darkness and depravity in which they are held captive.

- 3:8 - “and just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these also are opposing the truth, men with a corrupt state of mind, worthless ones concerning the faith”

Jannes and Jambres are mentioned only here in the NT. And even though their names do not even appear in the OT (Ex. 7:11, 22), their names do appear in *The Targums* [Aramaic paraphrases of the Books of the OT] of *Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch* – “Janis and Jamberes, magicians of Mizraim, did the same by their burings of divination” (Etheridge, 461). In other words, they were “the Egyptian magicians who attempted miracles before Pharaoh to offset the miracles of Moses” (Harvey, 107). So, they are here designated as those who “opposed Moses” and the truth of God in and through him.

These false teachers were following in the tracks of the Egyptian sorcerers in that they too opposed the truth of the gospel. They were doing so because they were in a permanent mental and moral state or condition of “being corrupt” (*kataphtharmenoi* - perfect tense, passive voice: “depraved, ruined”). The light within them became darkness. They were, therefore, “worthless ones concerning the faith” (*adokimoi peri ten pistin*). The word “worthless ones” (*adokimoi* – elsewhere in the NT: Rom. 1:28; 1 Cor. 9:27; 2 Cor. 13:5, 6, 7; Tit. 1:16; Heb. 6:8) means that they are “rejected” or “unworthy” in regard to the Christian faith and its truths. As Harvey (107) observes, “A corrupt head, a corrupt heart, and a vicious life usually attend and accompany one another.” They had no ability to prove otherwise. They were devoid of spiritual realities. The seducers had been seduced and were permanently locked in the prisonhouse of despair, delusions, and damnation.

#### C. Sarcasm (3:9)

- 3:9 - “But they shall not advance further; for their foolishness shall be evident to all, even as theirs was”

However, with an accent of sarcasm, Paul declares that these seducers will not proceed any further with their false teachings because their utter “foolishness” (*anoia* – “stupidity, rage, fury”) will become “evident” (*ekdelos* – “clearly apparent or axiomatic” – only here in the NT) to all.

In other words, in terms of the spread of evil by these false teachers, “there will be a limit to [their] success” (White, 172).

He offers this positively persuasive point on the basis of the parallel fact that the same thing happened to Jannes and Jambres. In other words, “a very severe punishment is denoted by the apostle’s moderate expression, concerning a well-known fact” (Bengel, 551).

#### IV ENDURANCE (3:10-4:8)

##### A. Stedfastness in Sufferings (3:10-11a)

3:10 - “But you followed my teaching, my conduct, my purpose, my faith, my patience, my love, my endurance”

The words “but you” (*Su de*) signal a stunning contrast to the seducers of false teachings which he has delineated in vss. 6-9. They have “opposed” Paul’s teachings, whereas Timothy has “followed” (*parekolouthesas* – cp. 1 Tim. 4:6; only two other occurrences in the NT: Mk. 16:17; Lk. 1:3) his teachings. The word means “follow closely, give careful attention to; accompany, attend.” Kelly (198) paraphrases, “‘study at close quarters,’ ‘follow in spirit,’ ‘carefully note with a view to reproducing,’ and so ‘take as an example.’”

In this vs., Paul identifies seven features which have been followed – and two more in v. 11. These are “values that are not optional or relative but of absolute importance in the life of the Lord’s servant” (Liefeld, 278):

- (1) “my teaching” (*didaskalia*) – “the principles Paul had taught, including also probably his spirit and methods in teaching. These had been to Timothy the models of doctrine after which he had patterned his instruction – ‘guiding others, as it were, which he followed’” (Harvey, 108);
- (2) “my conduct” (*agoge*) – This refers to “the external expressions” (White, 173) of his teaching principles: his way of living or manner of life. This word occurs here only in the NT.
- (3) “my purpose” (*prothesei*) – This refers to his “way of thinking, devotion to plan; resolve, will” (BAG, 713); “that which a person sets before him as the end to be attained” (Hervey, 42);
- (4) “my faith” (*pistei*) – This refers to his commitment to pursue his purpose;
- (5) “my patience” (*makrothumia*) – This refers to his “forbearance, patience toward others” (BAG, 489); “having power to avenge himself, yet refrains from the exercise of this power” (Trench, 195);
- (6) “my love” (*agape*) – This is the motivating factor within and behind his selfless service; it is devoid of interests which impact or enhance self-promotion, self-preservation, self-cuddling, acquisitiveness, rivalry, and vanity;
- (7) “my endurance” (*hupomone*) – This refers to the “patient bearing of

evil, without swerving from the temper and faith of the gospel” (Harvey, 108); the “*brave patience* in enduring not only contradiction and opposition, but even injury and wrong” (Ellicott, 149); it denotes contending “against the various hindrances, persecutions, and temptations that befall in his conflict with the inward and outward world” (Trench, 197); it involves bearing up, not losing courage in the challenges of life’s turmoils and torturous terrain.

3:11a - “in my persecutions, in my sufferings, such things I endured at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra, what persecutions I endured”

(8) “my persecutions” (*diogmois*) - (9) “my sufferings” (*pathemasin*) - This involves sufferings which are “endured as a result of persecution” (Knight, 440); “it first denotes that which befalls a man and has to be accepted by him. . . . it has the rare meaning ‘passion,’ ‘impulse’ but its main sense is ‘suffering’ . . . it embraces “sorrowful mood, sorrow, grief, state of suffering” (Michaelis, 930). With the exception of Heb. 2:9, it always occurs in the NT in the plural.

Vincent (314) points out “these cities may have been selected as illustrations because Timothy was at home in that region.”[Antioch: Acts 11:19, 20, 22, 26, 27; 13:1, 14; 14:19, 21, 26; 15:22, 23, 30, 35; 18:22; Ga. 2:11; Iconium: Acts 13:51; 14:1, 19, 21; 16:2; Lystra: Acts 14:6, 8, 21; 16:1). Paul states that he “endured” them all without giving up on the faith, and giving in to the discouragement and denial of the faith which such persecutions were designed to bring about.

#### B. Sovereignty of God (3:11b)

3:11b - “and the Lord delivered me out of them all”

In each and every instance of the various flavored difficulties he encountered, he was “delivered” (*errusato* – “rescued”) by the Lord’s ability – a word Paul uses again in 4:17, 18. [Paul uses this word also in Rom. 7:24; 11:26; 15:31; 2 Cor. 1:10 (three times); Col. 1:13; 1 Thes. 1:10; 2 Thes. 3:2 --- it occurs also in Mt. 6:13; 27:43; Lk. 1:74; 11:4; 2 Pt. 2:7, 9.]

This *deliverance* is designed to remind Timothy of the sovereignty of God over all sufferings so as to strengthen him for his own perils in the present and the future. “He never forsook me,” Paul says, and “he will never forsake you.”

#### C. Striking Contrasts (3:12-13)

3:12 - “and, indeed, all who are desiring to live godly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted”



By the word “all” concerning those who desire and are determined to live “godly” (*eusebos*), Paul is acknowledging that he is not the only one to desire this. That is, he does not “regard his experience as peculiar, but only part” (Robertson, 626) of the company of the committed who share equally in this aspiration.

Therefore, to share equally in this aspiration is to also share in the sufferings of persecutions which are common to “all” and par for the course within Christian discipleship. This is in striking contrast to the false teachers who are further describe in v. 13.

[In fact, the noun “persecution” (*diogmos*) occurs in the NT: Mt. 13:21; Mk. 4:17; 10:30; Acts 8:1; 13:50; Rom. 8:35; 2 Cor. 12:10; 2 Thes. 1:4; the noun “persecutor” (*dioktes*) in 1 Tim. 1:13; and the verb “persecute, persecuted” (*dioko*) in Mt. 5:10, 11, 12, 44; 10:23; 23:34; Lk. 21:12; Jn. 5:16; 15:20 (twice); Acts 7:52; 9:4, 5; 22:4, 7, 8; 26:11, 14, 15; Rom. 12:14; 1 Cor. 4:12; 15:9; 2 Cor. 4:9; Gal. 1:13, 23; 4:29; 5:11; 6:12; Phil. 3:6; Rev. 12:13.]

- 3:13 - “But evil men and imposters shall advance to the worse, deceiving and being deceived”

So, while suffering persecution for the sake of the gospel is normative for godly living, the persecutors themselves are here described as “evil men” (*poneroi anthropoi*) and imposters” (*goetes*).

The word “evil” (*poneroi*) means “bad, wicked, sinful; worthless.” It is described by BAG (697) as “*vicious, degenerate; evil-intentioned person, evil-doer.*” Again, this is another stroke of alarm, “*for contrast’s sake*” (Alford, 395) between them and Paul and Timothy.

The word “imposters” (*goetes*) occurs here only in the NT. It depicts them as “wailers, professional mourners, deceivers, jugglers” (Robertson, 626). The expression “shall advance to the worse” seems to be a contradiction to v. 9. However, in v. 9, reference was to “the *diffusion* of evil, here its intensity” (Alford, 395).

To say that they are “deceiving” is an active voice participle meaning that they are deceiving others, while the passive voice participle means that they are “being deceived” and led astray from the truth by adherence to lies. Indeed, “the tragedy of it all is that these seducers are able to deceive others as well as themselves” (Robertson, 626).

D. Scriptural Foundation (3:14-17)

- 3:14 - “But you must continue in the things you learned and have been assured of, knowing from whom you learned”

Another contrast is indicated by the words “but you” (*su de* – cp. v.10)

in Paul's charge to Timothy. In contrast to the "deceived deceivers" who 'go on from bad to worse,'" (Gealy, 504), Timothy is to be firmly fixed in what he has learned from Paul – and perhaps others. He is to remain firmly fixed in connection with "the things" about which he has been "assured" (*epistothēs* – meaning "firmly believed, entrusted with.") After all, he "learned" (*manthano* – used twice in this verse) them "at a definite time, and once and for all, what the Christian faith is. As a revelation and a deposit it cannot change or be changed; it is to be learned, held intact, and transmitted" (Gealy, 505) without alternations, adaptations, modifications, and above all, not any form of separation from them. Timothy "must continue" to persevere in the essential teachings of the gospel tradition and to his own tested and trustworthy convictions.

- 3:15 - "and that from a babe you know the sacred writings which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus"

"The sacred writings" (*hiera grammata* – occurring here only in the NT) are also offered as another strong, scriptural foundation to which Timothy may rest his case and must remain faithful to them. They, and they alone, "convey the knowledge, theoretical and practical, which leads to salvation" (Gealy, 505). Reference is clearly to the OT Scriptures, and possibly any Gospel accounts, as well as any epistle manuscripts, which were in circulation. This layout "recognizes the great tradition of faith to which learners and teachers are alike indebted" (Noyes, 506).

Paul is careful to underscore the fact that this salvation comes only "through faith in Christ Jesus." In other words, the scriptural foundation insists on the faith which rests exclusively in/on Christ Jesus. "It is through this faith that the truths of Scripture lead to salvation. . . . Faith in Christ is, as it were, a torch, by the light of which we can first read aright and understand the dim colonnades and mysterious inscriptions in the ancient venerable temple of the Old Covenant" (Harvey, 110). They lead nowhere else but to "Christ Jesus."

- 3:16 - "All scripture inspired of God [is] also profitable for teaching, for refutation of error, for correcting faults, for training in righteousness"

The words "all scripture inspired of God" means that God speaks through His sacred writings and is thus unique among all other writings in history or in the future. The word "inspired of God" (*theopneustos*) means "God-breathed." The word tells us nothing of the peculiar character or limits of inspiration beyond the fact that it proceeds from God" (Vincent, 317). Nevertheless, through His sacred writings, God speaks and provides information which cannot be attained elsewhere. Four specific facets of this information are here itemized in terms of its importance and ways in

which this information is “profitable” (*ophelimos*) or beneficial for God’s people – especially here noted in relation to Timothy.

that is (1) “for teaching” truths rather than lies, myths, speculations, and mere theoretical guesswork. Philosophical, and even religious, speculations may have their place in the mental meanderings of mankind. But they have no place when it comes to divine revelation of truths which cannot be found other than in these sacred writings.

But through the sacred writings “into which God has breathed his Spirit not only does there come teaching or enlightenment” (Noyes, 506) but also other profitable purposes and/or consequences: (2) “refutation of error” – That is, “correcting false opinions” (Gealy, 507), like the false statements and arguments offered by the false teachers; (3) “correcting faults” – That is, “restoring those who are in error” (Ibid); the word “correcting” (*epanorthosin*) means “setting a personal or thing straight, applied equally to opinions and to morals, or way of life” (Hervey, 44); “restoring to an upright state; *setting right*” (Vincent, 318); this word occurs here only in the NT; and (4) “training in righteousness” – That is, “training or education that is to be found in the way of righteousness; *instruction which is in righteousness*” (Wycliffe, 877); “constructive education in Christian life” (Kelly, 204).

3:17 - “that the man of God may be completely adequate, having been equipped for every good work”

The purpose of these foundational scriptural truths is that as “the man of God,” Timothy may thereby be “completely adequate” (*artios* – i.e., “fully qualified” – occurring here only in the NT) to carry out these four specified features of scripture in behalf of others. His work as a man of God then remains true for all other men of God since then. The “performance of it” (White, 175) is not subject to subjective feelings, personal preferences, or public opinions, but to these four features which are still standing and have withstood the test of time.

They are here classified as “good works” which Timothy is to dispense to others because they are beneficial in Christian discipleship.

“The importance of good works cannot be overemphasized. These are the marks of the genuine servants and people of God in contrast to the false teachers” (Liefeld, 280-281). Cp. my article on “Good Works” in the NT on my website: [archive.org/details/@mandm313](http://archive.org/details/@mandm313).

#### E. Solemn Charge (4:1-5)

4:1 - “I am earnestly testifying in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus Who is going to judge [the] living and [the] dead, even by His appearing and His kingship”

Strathmann (510, 512) points out that the word “earnestly testifying” (*diamarturomai*) is linked with a verb which originally meant “‘to invoke someone as a witness about something,’ [and] ‘to make a solemn declaration about’”; with the word now meaning ‘to declare emphatically’ by way of admonition.” So, the KJV, NASB, and Williams all translate it as a “charge or solemn charge” from Paul to Timothy.

Paul is about to issue five imperatives to Timothy in v. 2 – and three more in v. 5 – and he will do so on the basis of and in accordance with his solemn testimony before God and Christ Jesus about his need to be faithful and responsible in preaching the Word of God. After all, his responsibility in preaching the Word does not consist of adoration moments by those who hear the Word, nor the applause or apathy of the hearers. Just as Paul’s own testimony here takes place in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, Timothy’s preaching will occur in that same context or setting as well. It is, therefore, of the utmost soundness of mind and heart that what Paul says and what Timothy does is conducted with this awareness. Be faithful in the discharge of declaring the truths of God’s Word whether people listen or not. After all, “he is answerable finally” (Gould, 653) to God alone.

Paul then adds some aspects of the Divine Presence which are aimed at accenting the urgency and significance of Timothy’s task in the light of this Presence: (1) “going to judge living and dead” – The judgment of all people – those now living and those who have already died – at the Divine Tribunal will include Timothy’s preaching. This very thought should motivate Timothy to not take his responsibility with a grain of salt, a phlegmatic posture, or a mere casual attitude of routine as usual. This mention of “living and dead” squares with what Paul says in 1 Thes. 4:15-17. (2) “by His appearing” – There will be no ambassador sent to this judgment. It will be before the Judge Himself Who “will personally inaugurate the judgment” (Gealy, 508). (3) “His kingship” indicates “the solemnity” (Hinson, 355) of this judgment. The word “kingship” (*Basileian* – “reign, rule, kingdom, domain”) further reenforces the urgency and significance of the fact that God is the One Who is really in charge. He is ruling now and will be ruling then. So, “Timothy is to be encouraged to perform his task by the fact that Christ will appear and that Timothy himself will receive the crown of righteousness at Christ’s appearing and be safely brought into Christ’s future heavenly kingdom” (Knight, 453). This is “the perfected kingdom, the manifestation of which will follow the second appearing” (White, 176). This word occurs again in 4:18 and ties together the idea set forth in his verse. Therefore, in light of the foundation just laid, Paul’s solemn charge is now discharged:

4:2 - “preach the Word, be ready when the time is right and when it is not;

confront, censure, comfort, with all patience and instruction”

The five imperatives are: (1) “preach the Word” – This Word both contains and is the Word of God and the good news within and about that Word. See Dodd (1-49) for what constituted the essential focus or content in the primitive or early Christian message which was preached. As Hervey (57) states: “It is impossible to exaggerate the dignity and importance here given to preaching by its being made the subject of so solemn and awful an adjuration as that in ver.1.” As Noyes (508) puts it:

Preach the good news of God revealed in Christ. Life is not a meaningless tragedy but a glorious fellowship with the Father. Duty is not a dull drudgery but a chance to be a fellow worker with God. Sin need not be endless slavery to evil, for Christ came into the world to save sinners. Death is not defeat for the spirit, for the gift of God is eternal life. ‘This is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith’ (1 John 5:4). An essential element in the fulfillment of all our highest hopes is the proclamation of this word.

- (2) “be ready” (*epistethi*) means “*stand by, be at hand, be present; signifies urgent, importunate, persevering*” (Vincent, 319). That is, “*be ready to act*” (White, 176). Gould (653) says it implies being “urgent.” This readiness is to occur “when the time is right and when it is not” – “in season, out of season.” The NEB translates, “press it home on all occasions, convenient or inconvenient.” Lenski (852) says the word means “‘be right on the spot!’ Timothy is to be right there when things seem favorable and when they do not. . . . there is never a time when it is not needed.” (3) “confront” (*elegxon*) means “bring to proof” (Robertson, 629); “*bring to light, expose, set forth; point out something to someone*” (BAG, 248) “until they are convinced that they are wrong” (Trentham, 131). (4) “censure” (*epitimeson*) means to “*rebuke, scold, chide, or blame, show him his fault.*” This is a stronger word than “confront,” and implies “more of authority and less of argument” (Hervey, 57). (5) “comfort” (*parakeleson*) means “encourage, speak words of encouragement; request, appeal to; console, cheer up.” These last three imperatives are especially important in regard to combatting false teachings. So, “every way of strengthening and establishing souls in the fear and love of God is to be tried” (Hervey, 57).

4:3 - “For the time shall come when they shall not give patient attention to healthy teaching but wanting to get their ears tickled they shall accumu-

late for themselves teachers in accordance with their own evil desires”

The reason for the five imperatives is imperative because people in churches (cp. 3:2, 5; “professing Christians” [Alford, 399]) will not tolerate truthful teachings. Instead, “the time *shall come* when they *shall not give* patient attention to healthy teaching.” These two future tense verbs are known as “The Futuristic Present [to] denote an event which has not yet occurred, but which is regarded as so certain that in thought it may be contemplated as already coming to pass” (Dana and Mantey, 185).

Winer (265) reinforces this position: “Only in appearance for the Future, when an action still future is to be designated as good as already present, either because it is already resolved upon, or because it follows according to some unalterable law.”

In other words, the future is taking place in the present.

Paul notes five features of these terrible times which are not referring to or related to the reaction of the world to the gospel message. Indeed, “Paul is not speaking of a change in the temper of the world in general but of a condition that will appear in the churches. Some churches will do what he here foretells; we have them today” (Lenski, 854). Rest assured: when there is no fire in the pulpits, there will be no fire in the pews! (1) “they shall not give patient attention to healthy teaching” – That is, the verb translated “shall not give patient attention to” (*anechontai*) means they will not tolerate, endure, or be patient with “healthy teaching” (*tes hugiainouses didaskalias*).

The word “healthy” (*hugiainouses* – cp. 1:13; cp. 1 Tim. 1:10; 6:3; Tit. 1:9, 13, 2:1, 2 – occurring elsewhere in the NT only in Lk. 5:31; 7:10; 15:27; 3 Jn. 2) indicates teachings which are wholesome, beneficial, wise, and appropriate for building Christian character and conduct. Some in the church, however, will find such distasteful; so, they are (2) “wanting to get their ears tickled they shall accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires” – That is, they only want teaching which will satisfy their own tastes; just tell them what they want to hear, not what they need to hear. This is a phrase which appears nowhere else in the NT. The result of this tickling or scratching or itching is that (3) “they shall accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own evil desires” – By only want “tickling gratification” (Lenski, 855) and not “truthful godly” teachings, instead of welcoming the power of the gospel message which pardons, radically transforms, and regenerates new life Christ, these church people surround themselves with teachers who only teach the opposite of truth, only to be poisoned with myths, fictions, lies and fables which bring them their desired self-satisfactions. As Alford (399) notes, they are “*like* the fables already believed.”

4:4 - “and shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be disabled by the myths”

By so pursuing their self-satisfaction desires, (4) “they shall turn away their ears from the truth” – Many are the people in churches who come to “hear” but not “obey,” who “hear” but do not want to “learn,” who “hear” but only “absorb” what brings them “pleasure.” As Noyes (509) declares:

Sometimes today congregations expect their ministers to say only the things that the people like to hear, and they turn away from the teacher who speaks the truth, come what may. Paul warns Timothy that he must be prepared to be so forsaken.

(5) “they shall be disabled by the myths” – The word “disabled” (*ek-trapesontai*) means “to turn aside, to wander away, to go astray” (cp. 1 Tim.1:6; 5:15; 6:20). The passive voice here indicates a being “dislocated” by mere “myths” “that will give a new momen-

tary thrill to their itching ears and morbid minds” (Robertson, 630). As was true then, and still remains true today, “whosoever will not listen to what is true, but only to what is pleasant, will at last wholly abandon himself to silly, fantastic chimeras [an absurd or impossible idea; wild fancy]” (Van Oosterzee, quoted by Harvey, 114). As Trentham (132) observes:

The men is describing were like those religious vagabonds who wander from church to church and imagine that the only thing wrong with them is that they are not hearing the right kind of preaching or teaching. They vainly imagine that all of their moral and spiritual ills could be healed if they could find the right magician. They imagine that religious truth is something that will transform them by intriguing them. Thus they ceaselessly wander after such myths, refusing to hear the truth of God and to yield to its steady and stabilizing demands.

4:5 - “But you must continually be sensibly self-controlled in all things, you must suffer hardship, you must do the work of an evangelist, you must fully carry out your ministry”

Here are four positive imperatives to which Timothy is to submit him-

self and constantly pursue: (1) “you must continually be sensibly self-controlled in all things” (*nephe en pasin*) – The NEB translates, “keep calm and sane at all times.” This involves “clearness, calmness, steadiness, and moderation in all things” (Hervey, 58). That is, “in contrast with those who are drunken on the heady froth of religious fantasy” (Trentham, 132). (2) “you must suffer hardship” (*kakopatheson* – cp. 2:3, 9) – As Barclay (208) notes, “Christianity will cost something, and the Christian is to pay the price of it without grumbling and without regret.” To “*endure troubles; to be afflicted*” (Thayer, 320) is simply part of the Christian warfare. (3) “you must do the work of an evangelist” (*ergon poieson euaggelistou*) – This implies the need “to apply the military principle that the best defense is to attack. Proclaim the message of salvation in all its purity, power, and rigor, and thus confuse and defeat the enemies of the Lord” (Gould, 654). The word “evangelist” occurs only in Acts 21:8 and Eph. 4:11, and refers to an itinerant preacher who had no supervisory responsibilities. Paul is here reminding Timothy that “in the faithful performance of what might seem to be subordinate duties lies the best preservative of the Church from error” (White, 177). (4) “you must fully carry out your ministry” (*ten diakonian sou plerophoreson*) – This is “*ministry or service in general*” (White, 177); that is, “let there be no stint [limit, stopping, ceasing, desisting] of ministerial labour, but carry it out in its completeness, and to the end” (Hervey, 58).

The word translated “fully carry out” (*plerophoreson*) means “*to bear or bring full, to make full; to cause a thing to be shown to the full; to carry through to the end, accomplish*” (Thayer, 517). BAG (519) says the word “denotes not a conviction or assurance of the mind, but the result of such an assurance in life and conduct, the rich fruitfulness for which the conviction prepares the way.”

Williams translates, “do your work as a herald of the good news, and so fill your ministry to the brim.”

#### F. Service Status and Prospects (4:6-8)

- 4:6 - “For I am already being poured out as a drink-offering, and the opportune moment of my departure is present”

The OT background (Gen. 35:14; Number. 15:1-10) provides the setting for this opening parallel by Paul. The word libation means to “pour out.” “In Israel, as in the rest of the ancient Near East, libations were a secondary type of offering, i.e., they often accompanied other types of offering (Ex. 29:40f.; 2 Ch. 29:35)” (Lee, 118). As Francisco (236) points out, “the pouring of wine was a frequent feature of Israel’s worship both of Yahweh and otherwise (cf. 2 Kings 16:13; Isa. 57:6; Jer. 7:18).” It was a substitute for blood. It constituted the final part of the sacrificial ceremony.



Life, of course, is in the blood. The verb “being poured out as a drink-offering” (*spendomai*) occurs in the NT only here and Phil. 2:17. It was “figuratively used of one whose blood is poured out in a violent death for the cause of God” (Thayer, 583).

By this parallel, “Paul was thinking of his imminent death as an offering in the service of Christians and their faith. His whole life had been a sacrifice (Rom 12:1), and now his death would complete the life with a drink offering” (Wycliffe, 880).

The word translated, “the opportune moment” (*ho kairos*) [as opposed to *chronos*] indicates “time (viewed as an occasion rather than an extent), appointed or proper time, season; a moment of crisis.” This moment of crisis concerns his “departure” (*analuseos*) from this planet in physical death. It is a moment which “is present” (*ephesteken*). This is a perfect tense verb indicating that he is in a state or condition of awareness that “the end of his earthly ministry is near” (Liefeld, 289).

Lenski (859) suggests that “Paul is busy taking down his tent; he is casting off his ship’s moorings. Or to employ another figure: he is writing his last will and testament for Timothy who, when he reads these words, may well do so through a film of tears.”

4:7 - “I fought the good fight, I ran the race, I kept the faith”

Rather than engaging in an introspective, selfishly-absorbed sad song of badness and blame, his focus is lifted to higher ground, reflection, and celebration of the course of his life. He pinpoints three aspects of his life’s Christian contest with three perfect tense verbs which denote a state or condition of celebratory completeness: (1) “I fought the good fight” (*ton kalon agona hegonismai*) – The word “fought” (*hegonismai* – from *agonizomai*) is where we get the English words “agonize, agony.” It indicates “a struggle, competition.” Paul uses this word in 1 Cor. 9:25; Col. 1:29; 4:12; 1 Tim. 6:12. Its only other occurrences in the NT are Lk. 13:24 and Jn. 18:36.

Stauffer (137-138) lists five motifs (principal ideas, features, or themes; subjects for development or treatment) in this word: “a. First is the thought of the goal which can be reached only with the full expenditure of all our energies; b. The struggle for the reward does not demand only full exertion but also rigid denial; c. The thought of the antagonists is seldom expressed in the NT; d. The sharpest form of *agon* which the man who is faithful to God must undergo on earth is the battle of suffering fulfilled in martyrdom. e. The supreme goal for which we fight and work and suffer is not our own salvation alone; it is the salvation of many.” (2) “I ran the race” (*ton dromon teteleka*) – The word “ran” (*teteleka*) means to have completely run to the finish line: “finished my course” (KJV); “finished the course” (NASB); “run my race” (Williams);

“ran the race” (Beck). The word “race” (*dromon*) is “a metaphor for the race-course” (Vincent, 323). It occurs in the NT only here and Acts 13:25; 20:24. It means “race” or “course” BAG, 206) of one’s life as a Christian. It “denotes a career, course of occupation, or of life” (Vine, 251; Thayer, 158). As Barclay (210) observes: “It is easy to begin but hard to finish. The one thing necessary for life is staying-power, and that is what so many people lack. But it was Paul’s claim that he had finished the race. There is a deep satisfaction in reaching the goal.”

(3) “I kept the faith” (*ten pistin tetereka*) – The word “kept” (*tetereka*) means “observed, obeyed, paid attention to; maintained, kept firm, guarded.” Again, the perfect tense indicates that Paul has been guarding the faith and is still doing so but has almost completed his guardianship of it. The word “faith” (*pistin*) embodies trust, confidence, reliance, and commitment.

4:8 - “As for the rest [of my future], there is being laid away for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who are in a state or condition of loving His appearance”

The word translated “as for the rest” (*loipon*) means “as far as anything else in regard to me is concerned.”

Just as those who win races in athletic contests do so with the assurance of receiving a prize of some kind, even so Paul has run with that same type of assurance or confidence. His prize is “the crown of righteousness” (*ho tes dikaiosunes stephanos*) which is “the crown which consists of righteousness and is also the reward for righteousness” (Robertson, 631). It is the wreath of victory, so to speak. It is the righteousness which goes along with and is part of the imputed righteousness which comes by faith and is manifested in good works (3:17). Cp. Mt. 25:31-46. [See my commentary on Romans on my website: [archive.org/details/@mandm313](http://archive.org/details/@mandm313) and the expanded perspectives on “righteousness” within that letter.]

This “crown” is “being laid away” (*apokeitai* – present tense, passive voice) and “on that day” (1:12, 18) “shall be bestowed” (*apodosei* – “given, rendered” in no uncertain terms). Right now, it is “securely reserved, as a treasure gained and kept in a safe place for the future” (Harvey, 116).

And on “that day” (1:12, 18) it will be “awarded as the righteous requital of all the toil and conflict through which the victory has been achieved, and as the just reward of the righteous character which has thereby been attained” (Ibid.).

Paul’s thinking, however, goes beyond himself: “and not only to me but also to all who are in a state or condition of loving His appearance.”

The word “appearing” (*epiphaneioan*) first occurred in 1:10; 4:1 and may here encompass all aspects “of Christ’s Incarnation” (Robertson, 631).[The term occurs elsewhere only in 2 Thes. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:14; Tit. 2:13.] So, all who, like Paul, “have loved and still love His appearing” (perfect tense), will receive the bestowed crown – a major contrast with those who “loved this present world” (v. 10).

## V ENTREATIES (4:9-13)

### 4:9 - “Do your best to come to me soon”

Paul’s imperative to Timothy to “do your best” (*spoudason*) to come to see him indicates a sense of urgency that is here increased by the word “quickly” (*tacheos*) – an adverb indicating “quickly, soon.” This adverb “may express Paul’s desire to have Timothy with him as quickly as possible for some specific reason, or it may simply be practical advice to start out before the shipping lanes are closed for the winter (v. 21)” (Liefeld, 296). Robertson (631) suggests that “the trial might drag on through its various stages.” Whatever the precise meaning may be, the urgency and intensity in Paul’s entreaties should be viewed with utmost seriousness. Paul urged Timothy to understand him with “a heavy burden of responsibility” (Wuest, 164).

Indeed, Hervey’s (59) point is well-worded: “St. Paul’s affectionate longing for Timothy’s company in present danger and desertion is very touching.” Paul’s “distress will be compounded if Timothy is delayed by a long stop-over because of the onset of winter” (Liefeld, 297).

### 4:10 - “For Demus, having loved this present world, deserted me and went to Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia”

Demus is mentioned two other times in the NT: Col 4:11, Philemon 24: A co-worker with Paul during his first imprisonment. Because of his “having loved this present world,” his priorities were radically altered from “loving the Lord’s appearance” (v. 8) to a love for something else which took the place of love for God.

Demus’s love for the present world may have included “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of possessions” (1 Jn. 2:16), involving business pursuits, or other features of the “earthly, visible world, with its good things, in opposition to the invisible kingdom of Christ” (Harvey, 117). It may have been “desire for ease and comfort or perhaps fear of suffering” (Hinson, 357).

Whatever the attraction/s to “this present world” may have been, they were enough to cause him to desert Paul. The word “deserted” (*egkatelipen*) indicates he “forsook, abandoned, left behind; left [Paul] in the lurch.” [This word occurs elsewhere in the NT: Mt. 27:46/Mk 15:34; Acts 2:27;

Rom. 9:29; 2 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 10:25; 13:5.]

His departure to “Thessalonica” – “a great commercial capital of Macedonia” (Harvey, 117) – was a city full of worldly attractions due to its “rapid growth in population, wealth, and importance” (Madvig, 837).

The name Crescens occurs here only in the NT, so, a specific identity is without verification and subject to speculation, as is his reason for going to Galatia. The name Titus appears twelve other times in the NT: 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:6, 13, 14; 8:6, 16, 23; 12:18 (twice); Gal. 2:1, 3; Tit. 1:4. Dalmatia was “the southern portion of the imperial province of Illyricum, on the western shores of the Adriatic. We learn from Rom. 15:9 that Paul’s missionary activity had extended there. Unlike Demas, probably these two men had been sent by Paul on missions to the churches in the areas named” (Gould, 657).

- 4:11 - “Luke alone is with me. Pick up Mark [and] bring with yourself for he is useful to me for ministry”

Paul’s lone partner at the time was Luke. He is mentioned as one of Paul’s co-workers in Philemon 24, and as “the beloved physician” in Col. 4:14. Paul’s plea for Timothy to “pick up Mark [and] bring him with yourself” to see Paul is a seemingly ‘mark of mercy’ between the two.

According to Acts 15:36-41, Barnabas wanted to take Mark along with them as they revisited previous Christians on their second missionary journey. Paul objected to this in light of the fact that he had “deserted them in Pamphylia and did not go on with them to the work. The disagreement was so sharp that they separated, and Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus. But Paul selected Silas.”

Obviously, the rift between Paul and Mark had been remedied and “would now be gladly welcomed to the apostle’s companionship” (Gould, 657). What Paul meant by the words, “he is useful to me for ministry” may denote that Paul only thinks he is “profitable” for other phases of Christian ministry, and not necessarily “personal service” (Knight, 466).

- 4:12 - “And I sent Tychicus to Ephesus”

Tychicus is mentioned four other times in the NT: Acts 20:4; Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7; Tit. 3:12 – a fellowworker with Paul, as these passages illustrate. He was from Asia where Timothy apparently now is. Liefeld (298) suggests that “Paul may want Tychicus there [Ephesus] to begin preparations to carry on the ministry after Timothy leaves to visit Paul.”

- 4:13 - “When you come, bring the cloke I which I left with Carpus at Troas, and the books, specifically the parchments”

A very pragmatic, personal note is now added, especially in light of Paul’s plea in 4:21: “do your best to come before winter.” The “cloke” was “a long, thick garment, without sleeves, enwrapping the whole body; such a

garment as Paul would greatly need in his damp, unwarmed cell” (Harvey, 118).

Paul was also a man of learning whose love for books should be a stimulant for all preachers who may appear to make light of learning. Because of his being hurried away from Troas in the face of persecution, he obviously left some books [likely OT writings] behind. He, therefore, makes these another object of request to be brought to him. Harvey (118) continues:

The books, written on papyrus, were more perishable; but the parchments were costly, and doubtless were writings of higher importance. The apostle was now an old man, and was looking forward to a martyr’s death; but the love of study remained, and even in the felon’s cell he wants the books.

As Robertson (632) so simply, yet significantly, adds: “He would not waste his time in prison.”

## VI EXHORTATIONS (4:14-15)

4:14 - “Alexander the metal worker did much evil to me, the Lord will repay him according to his works”

The name “Alexander” is mentioned elsewhere in the NT in Mk. 15:21; Acts. 4:6; 19:33 (twice); 1 Tim. 1:20. If this is the one in 1 Tim., then he afterwards became a follower of the Way.

The word “metal worker” (*ho chalkeus*) occurs here only in the NT and denotes one whose work involves “copper, iron, gold, etc.” (Robertson, 632). The reference to “much evil to me” is not totally clear. “Possibly Alexander had come to Rome as one of Paul’s accusers before the imperial court, and the correct translation here may be, as given by Lange, ‘laid many evil charges against me’; and now, after the apostle’s trial and acquittal on the first charge, he had returned to Ephesus, smarting under his defeat, and likely, therefore, to be more dangerous to the cause there” (Harvey, 119).

Rather than personally attacking him himself, Paul left the appropriate level and form of repayment to the Lord, knowing that whatever it is, it will be in conjunction with what he did.

4:15 - “from whom you must guard yourself, for he greatly opposed our teaching”

Paul’s present tense, middle voice imperative is that Timothy must always guard himself against Alexander also. He was, indeed, “a current threat” (Liefeld, 299) to Timothy also, likely because of his connection with Paul. The reason is not without identity: “he greatly opposed our teaching.” The

word “opposed” (*anteste*) means to “resist, withstand.” and is qualified or strengthened by the word “greatly” (*lian* – “exceedingly, very much”) to indicate mean-spirited, aggressive, cruel, terror-stricken, and “perhaps violent” (Harvey, 119) behaviors consisting of “*much ill-treatment*” (Vincent, 327). So, if he opposed Paul’s teaching, and Timothy’s teaching was the same, then Timothy could very well expect the same type opposition.

## VII EMPOWERMENT (4:16-18)

4:16 - “At my first defense, no one supported me but everyone deserted me; may it not be held against them”

This is referring to his preliminary examination of charges against him before judicial proceedings in an actual trial in Rome began. He received no support from anyone to stand beside him during this evaluation. There were likely several in the vicinity to do so, but as the aorist tense verb “deserted” (*egkatelipon*) indicates, they left “one by one or all at once” (Robertson, 633).

Rather than being bitter and resentful toward them, however, Paul adopted the same attitude as Jesus on the cross (“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” – Lk. 23:34) and Stephen at his own moment of death (“Lord, don’t hold this sin against them” – Acts 7:60).

4:17 - “But the Lord stood by and strengthened me in order that through me the message may be fully proclaimed and heard by all the Gentiles, and I was rescued from the lion’s mouth”

Paul was glancing at his circumstances and gazing at the Lord Who stood by and strengthened him rather than joining the crowd of deserters. The word “strengthened” (*enedunamosen*) means that God enabled Paul or “poured power into me” (Robertson, 633) to faithfully follow and fulfill the task of proclaiming the message of God to “all the Gentiles.”

This rescue reminded Paul of Psalm 22:21 which he here quotes to reveal and reinforcement his confidence in the God of scripture.

4:18 - “The Lord shall rescue me from every wicked work and shall save me for His heavenly reign; to Him [is, be] the manifestation of His presence forever. Amen”

Paul then expresses his continued confidence in the Lord for future battles with “every wicked work” “which wicked men might inflict on Paul” (Lenski, 880). The word “shall save” (*sosei*) means to “*preserve* as God removes evil, he confers good” (Bengel, 557).

The words “for His heavenly reign” (*eis ten basileian autou ten epouranion*)

refer to His reigning from heaven over the affairs of this world. Indeed, the word *basileian* (commonly translated “kingdom”) refers to “the kingship or kingly rule of God. His kingship is to be acknowledged over all” (Stagg, 149 – which see for a more complete picture of this term in the NT: 149-169). The word “glory” (*doxa*) refers to the manifestation of God’s presence in this world of time and into the future of timelessness. God is not some far away, detached, simply observing God Who passively checks in periodically to see what all is going on. Paul is here acknowledging, proclaiming, and cheerfully delighting in regard to God’s active involvement of ruling kingship in this world; the timely manifestation of God’s presence on earth, and in anticipation continued manifestation of His presence beyond the earth. See my article, “The History of the World” on my website: [archive.org/details/@mandm313](http://archive.org/details/@mandm313). The transliterated into English Greek word *amen* (“amen”) seals the deal. It is Paul’s exuberant, overflowing, lavish, abounding way of exclaiming “truly, surely, let it be so always, say it again and again.”

## VIII EXCHANGE OF GREETINGS (4:19-21)

4:19 - “Greet Priscas and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus”

Prisca and Aquila – This couple (wife and husband) were friends of Paul whom he met at Corinth. Since they were of the same trade as Paul (tent makers), they went with him to Ephesus where they met Apollos and “expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly” (Acts. 18:2-3; 18, 26; Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19). Onesiphorus (household) – He is first mentioned in 1:16-18 for having shown special kindness to Paul, which see for comments.

4:20 - “Erastus remained in Corinth, and Trophimus I left sick at Miletus”

Erastus – According to Acts 19:22, while at Ephesus, Paul sent him along with Timothy to Macedonia. He is also mentioned in Rom. 16:23 as “the city treasurer” of Corinth, which is why he stayed in Corinth. Trophimus – He was from Ephesus and had accompanied Paul from Corinth to Jerusalem on Paul’s third missionary journey (Acts 20:4; 21:29), but is otherwise unidentifiable. The verb “I left sick” (*asthenounta*) is used elsewhere in the NT to denote physical sickness (Mt. 10:9; 25:36; Mk. 6:56; Lk. 4:40; 7:10; 9:2; Jn. 4:46; 5:3, 7; 6:2; 11:1,2, 3, 6; Ac. 9:37; 19:12; 20:35; Phil. 2:26, 27; Jm. 5:14. So, for some unknown reason, Paul was not to be the human instrument for Trophimus’s healing, as he had been for others.

4:21 - “Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus sends his greetings to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers”

The imperative “do your best” (*spoudason*) to come before winter is most practi-

cal. Since they would have to come by ship, “during the winter the Adriatic was virtually closed to sea traffic” (Hinson, 360) and the winter storms would make such a trip impossible.

Eubulus – No other mention in the NT.

Pudens – No other mention in the NT.

Linus – No other mention in the NT.

Claudia – No other mention in the NT.\

Knight (477) makes these observations:

They are probably members of the church at Rome, since their names are joined to *hoi adelphoi pantes* [“all the brothers”], which is probably a general designation for members of that church. These four are singled out perhaps because they have a close relationship with Timothy going back to when he was in Rome with Paul (cf. Timothy’s inclusion with Paul as author in Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Phm. 1).

## IX EULOGY (4:22)

4:22 - “The Lord [be] with your spirit. The grace with all of you.”

This first phrase is directed to Timothy himself (“your” – *sou*). “The Lord” (*Ho kurios*) is the term used exclusively in regard to Jesus in 1 Timothy (1:1, 2, 12, 14; 5:21; 6:3, 14, 15) and now for the final time in 2 Timothy (1:2, 8, 16, 18 (twice); 2:7, 14, 19, 22, 24; 3:11; 4:1, 8, 14, 17, 18),

The words “your spirit” (*pneumatou sou*) “makes it clear that Paul is speaking of spiritual presence, wishing, i.e., that the Lord will be spiritually present with Timothy in his inner person” (Knight, 478).

The second phrase is directed to all the church members as indicated by the plural (*humon*). This, obviously, is the last occurrence of the word “grace” in this letter. He opened with it in 1:2, 9; 2:1 and now closes with it. He had done the same in 1 Timothy (1:2, 13, 14; 6:21). It is Paul’s final reminder that all of them are dependent upon the unmerited favor of God which falls upon them undeservedly, but with full measure to all.



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